

## Busy Earnin'

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by [thevault](#)

### Summary

Rhys finds himself short on money for rent- again. But this time, he's extra desperate. Desperate enough to take advice from Yvette on a less-than-ethical means of making end's meet. Beggars can't be choosers, right?

And maybe Rhys kind of likes it a little. (He likes it a lot.)

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Or, the one where Rhys joins a raunchy website for sugar daddies in search of sugar babies and meets (unbeknownst to him) none other than sugar daddy Handsome Jack.

### Notes

sup y'all. I haven't written a fic in years so, y'know, bear with me. The first chapter is a little

short just to get the introduction going but I promise they get longer. I actually have 4 chapters of this fic already completely written because I was waiting for my invite for the site but I'm gonna be uploading them over time, probably once a week, just so you guys don't get the idea that a bitch is gonna be uploading 4 chapters a day. I hope you guys like it, this is totally self-indulgent but I'm super excited to share it with the world lmao.

tl;dr that shit ain't important but what's below the cut is so take a peek

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\*Rhys is 24 in this fic ok!!! Deal with it. Jack is 37.

\*I will be adding tags as they're applicable although I did tag all the characters that have appeared in the 4 chapters I've already written.

\*This shit's gonna get smutty hence the E rating, just not in this chapter. (Also definitely violent at some point but that's to be expected when Jack is involved.)

\*All chapters are unbeta'd so they ain't perfect.

I think that covers everything I wanted to say for this chapter... Sorry for the long notes.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

# Chapter 1

Rhys had no idea how he'd gotten to this point.

Okay, that wasn't exactly true. He definitely knew how it started, where the whole idea came from- Yvette, that shameless, wonderful woman. But how he actually came to *going through with it*? ... Yeah, maybe he knew that too. It just made him feel a little better if he pretended he more or less fell into creating the god forsaken account staring him in the face in the darkness of his room.

Not that he felt *bad* about creating it. Actually, he was kind of excited if he was being completely honest with himself. Which, okay, yeah, maybe he was a little narcissistic and thought he'd be rakin' in the dough in no time. Or maybe the narcissistic part was that he *wanted* the attention, wanted to be told he was pretty by strangers on the internet and that was half the reason he created the account in the first place.

Either way it was too late to turn back now, the account was already created and Rhys was already far too invested to just simply hit the little '*Delete Account*' button after all the hard work he'd put in. 'Hard work' being some data entry on himself and a few uploaded selfies. Don't judge him, okay?

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So, it started out like this:

Rhys was short on cash. Like, *real* short. Believe it or not, Hyperion didn't exactly pay all that well; at least not until you were high up enough in the ranks to have enough clearance to start shooting people out into space. Therefore, the lack of pay combined with mountains of student debt put Rhys in the position he was in now.

"I don't know what we're gonna do, bro," Rhys all but whined into his coffee cup. Him and Vaughn were having their usual morning coffee in the Hub of Heroism before the work day started.

"You don't know what *you're* going to do, bro," Vaughn clarified, discreetly scooting Rhys' coffee cup from under his face before he accidentally knocked it over. "Not trying to, y'know, be a dick or anything, but I've got my half of rent together. You know I'd help you out if I could, but--"

"I know, I know. You were pulling change out of the couch this morning just to have enough to get coffee today, I get it. You're barely covering your own ass," Rhys sighed dramatically, tipping his head back to look up at the ceiling. "I wouldn't ask you to cover for me anyway, bro. I'd probably never be able to pay you back anyway..."

"Are you two still complaining about not having any money instead of actually trying to do something about it?" Came Yvette's voice, her heels clicking as she made her way to the table. She pulled a chair out for herself and joined them to Vaughn's left, crossing her legs promptly. On the bright side, Yvette hadn't been able to sucker them in to buying her lunch lately because of their sad financial state.

"Good morning to you, too, Yvette," Vaughn mumbled, adjusting his glasses on the bridge of his nose. "Rhys is the one complaining, by the way. *I've* got my affairs in order this month."

Rhys threw a scowl Vaughn's way. He sounded just a little too proud of himself for someone who almost had a mental breakdown two months back because he'd drunkenly spent half his rent money on video games- the kind of video games that were centered more on anime titties than they were on anything else. It took Rhys an hour of sweet-talking and another two hours on hold to get Vaughn

his money back.

“Look, I’ll figure something out. I always figure something out, right?” Rhys said with a nervous chuckle, scratching the back of his neck as he pulled himself out of the slump he’d been seated in to sit more like a normal human.

“Actually, you might not have to figure anything out,” Yvette said in a tone that definitely meant she had a horrible idea.

“No. No, no, no, absolutely not. Whatever you’re going to say it is off the table,” Vaughn, ever the worry wort chimed in, waving his hands in front of him in a *‘no thank you’* gesture. “Yvette, not to be rude, but your ideas are, quite frankly, terrifying. And if they’re not terrifying, they’re weird. Or both! So, I’m going to save my best bro over here by politely declining your offer.”

But Rhys was desperate and rent was due next week so when he opened his mouth and said, “let’s hear her out,” he promptly ignored the open-mouthed gaze Vaughn cast his way. He also decidedly ignored Yvette’s smug look, too.

“So there’s this website-“ a groan from Vaughn cut her off, causing Yvette to throw an icy glare in his direction over the frame of her glasses. “*So there’s this website,*” she started again, “where I heard you can make some fast cash. You don’t even have to really do anything, which I know your lazy ass is all about, Rhys. But anyway, a co-worker of mine was telling me about it. He said all you have to do is make an account, talk to some creepy older men and they pay you for it.”

A silence settled across the group of friends for a few brief moments. Vaughn was looking between Rhys and Yvette with an incredulity only Vaughn could muster. It was obvious he didn’t know who to be more appalled with- Yvette for even suggesting such a thing, or Rhys for not looking just as appalled as Vaughn.

“*Go on,*” Rhys murmured, moving his hand in a circular motion to indicate that Yvette should continue. The squeak that came from Vaughn made him jump a little, but the fists that came down on the table was really what made him jerk.

“You’re kidding, right? You have to be kidding. You’re not that stupid, Rhys,” Vaughn rambled, watching Rhys take a smug sip of his coffee as if to silently say, *‘maybe I am that stupid’*. “This sounds like some creepy dark web shit! There’s no way you’re actually considering this.”

Rhys and Yvette shared a look before Yvette continued, “He said you don’t even have to meet with these guys if you don’t want to. Some of them literally just want to talk to some pretty little thing to pass the time. Look, all I’m saying is it’s an option. Your rent is, what, due next week? I don’t see how else you could get enough money in order by then without actually becoming a lady of the night. All you have to do is find a few suckers, get them to pay you enough for rent, and then delete the account. No one said you have to keep it.” Yvette shrugged and crossed her arms across her chest, leaning back in her chair casually.

Rhys tapped a finger on his chin thoughtfully, effectively ignoring the pointed look Vaughn was giving him. Talk to a few creepy old rich guys on the internet and get paid for it? Didn’t sound like a bad gig. “What’s the website?”

“*What?!*” Vaughn practically shouted, throwing his arms up in the air. A few people at tables near them cast glances their way but quickly went back to their own conversations. “You realize this is how people go missing, right? Get kidnapped? Turned into sex slaves for ninety year-old men? I can’t be the only one with half a brain here. You could get *killed*, Rhys. People who are into that sort of thing are *freaks!*” Vaughn felt like he was going to hyperventilate. How could they be seriously

talking about this?

“Vaughn, bro, I’m not going to get killed. How would they even know where I live?” Rhys mused as if he were asking a question so simple as ‘what color is the sky?’ “It’s just *talking*. You know, like those D&D forums you like to go on. You know how many creepy old dudes are probably on those forums?” Rhys huffed and turned his attention back to Yvette, quirked an eyebrow at her now almost-meek expression.

“And you might have to send them nudes,” Yvette whispered so quickly both the men at the table almost missed it. Rhys’ eyebrows shut up to his hairline and Vaughn let out a strangled noise, nearly falling out of his chair.

“See! See! I knew it, there was *no* way you could just talk to these guys and get paid for it. Freaks, Rhys, they’re all freaks. *Phew*, glad we got that bad idea out of the way.” Vaughn glanced at his watch and made a tutting sound. “Looks like we gotta hit the ol’ grind-“ Vaughn stopped talking as he watched Yvette write the website down on the sleeve she’d taken off her coffee cup and slide it across the table to Rhys. Vaughn made a grab for it but Rhys got to it before him and tucked it into his back pocket.

“Desperate times call for desperate measures, bro,” Rhys said as he stood up from his seat a little too fast, placing a hand to his forehead as he got a head rush. “See you guys at lunch!” Rhys turned on his heel and left before Vaughn could protest enough to make him realize just how much of a bad idea this all was.

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So there Rhys was, sitting on his bed cross-legged in the dark, laptop resting on his knees as he eyed his profile. The black-and-purple schematic of the website was absolutely horrible on the eyes but it definitely fit the dark-web feel of it all. Not that this was even considered remotely close to the dark web, it was a public domain for fuck’s sake. He didn’t even have to put his age in to get on the damn site! Which, in the most disgusting and creepy way, definitely made sense. It was a *sugar baby* website, after all.

Rhys made a disgusted face as he tried not to think about just how young some of the people on this website- and how *old*- they could be. He shook his head and tried to clear his mind of those thoughts, scrolling through the pictures he’d chosen to upload instead. He only put up three pictures but they were all good ones. There was one of him at a beach on Eden-5 where he and Vaughn had gone for spring break their senior year in college. He was laying in the sand, a big smile on his freckled face (Rhys prided himself in his sun-freckles, okay?) There was some sand stuck to his neck and under his chin, his blue tattoos visible as most of his bare chest was exposed in the photo. He looked a little younger than he did now since it was a few years ago, but he looked damn good in that picture, sue him. He figured the creepy old guys on this site would appreciate his younger self, anyway.

The other two photos were more recent. One was when he had gotten his job at Hyperion, all dressed up in his work clothes, Hyperion lanyard around his neck and one of the many ‘*Jack The New Face of Hyperion*’ signs that were around the station behind him, causing a soft yellow glow to illuminate his face from behind. Rhys glanced up at an identical poster he had hanging up next to his bed, Handsome Jack’s smug face sneering back at him.

The third was from his visit to Opportunity a few months back, only this one wasn’t a selfie. Vaughn had taken the picture of him in front of one of the many Handsome Jack statues that were scattered across the city, specifically the one where Jack stood tall and confident, a Vault Key in one hand, a baby in the other. He chose that photo because it gave a good idea of just how tall he was, long and

lean with legs that seemed to go all the way up. Maybe he shouldn't have had so many Handsome Jack-centered photos, but that was neither here nor there.

Just as he was about to shut his laptop and try to get some sleep a soft chime and notification caught his eye. He glanced at his inbox, a little number one taunting him. His heart started to pound, his nerves getting the best of him. He stared at the number as if it held all the answers in the universe, chewing on his bottom lip nervously. He hovered the mouse over the number just as the one turned into a two, the little chime making him jump in the otherwise silent room.

Before he could get too in his head he took a deep breath and clicked on the little envelope, the screen loading quickly to his inbox. Three messages now, two from the same person and one from someone else. He made a face at the usernames, **xPapaBearx** and **MoneyXXX123**, respectively. He clicked on the latter first, blushing at the message he read:

>hey sweet thing, those legs go all the way up?

Which, okay, *totally* unoriginal, but he didn't exactly come to sugarbabydaddy.com for the riveting conversation. He minimized the conversation for now only to find **xPapaBearx** had messaged him two more times, plus another two from two more people. Yeah, he could definitely get used to this kind of attention. His nerves turned into excitement as he rolled over to lay on his stomach, propped up on his elbows with his laptop in front of him. He licked his lips and opened another message, this one from **KingKock420**:

>wats a cute thing like u doing on here? ;)

Rhys snorted and rolled his eyes, fingers hovering over the keyboard. He hummed to himself as he tried to think of how to play this, cute and innocent or sexy and direct? He kicked his legs back and forth up in the air behind him slowly, smirking when he decided on an answer:

>>idk, maybe i got lost? can you help?

Seconds passed, mere *seconds* before **KingKock420** sent a dick pic, making Rhys sputter and close the message quickly. He took a few steadying breaths and let the blush drain from his face before he opened it again, quirked an eyebrow at the almost laughably small dick staring him in the face.

“So much for ‘*KingKock*’,” Rhys muttered and closed the message, skimming through the quickly accumulation messages. A very narcissistic thrill vibrated up Rhys’ spine as he tapped the fingers of his robotic hand on the edge of his laptop. Okay, so maybe he was liking this a little *too* much... But who was really to say? In the quiet of his room, all by himself, he could revel in the pleasure he was getting from all the attention as much as he wanted. So what if Vaughn would probably immediately disown him as a friend if he found out just how much he liked this? What he didn't know wouldn't hurt him.

Rhys spent the better part of the night- and by better part of the night he means stayed up until 3 AM- going through messages upon messages that almost never seemed to stop coming in. Some of the men complimented him and called him cute pet names, others went straight to the point asking how much his nudes would cost. It was strange to him that people were willing to *pay* for naked pictures of him instead of just looking up an infinite amount of photos of naked guys who were probably way more attractive than him on the ECHOnet. Not that he was complaining.

Rhys had been pleasantly surprised to find that not all of the men hitting him up were old and creepy. A lot of them were, like probably eighty percent, but there were actually some good looking guys looking to spoil a cute little thing like himself. It was those conversations that really kept him up, blushing and giggling to himself in the dark as he shamelessly soaked up every compliment and

winky face.

By the time rent was due Rhys had more than enough credits to cover his half. Vaughn made a point to not ask how Rhys pulled the money together since he obviously wouldn't like the answer. How upset could Vaughn *really* be? They weren't getting evicted, so that seemed like a big win to Rhys. Plus, now that rent was paid he was going to delete the account and forget that any of this ever happened.

## Chapter 2

### Chapter Summary

Rhys gets a message from a new sugar daddy but gets drunk with his friends instead of answering. That is, until he gets home and gets a little... Generous with this new daddy.

### Chapter Notes

And so it begins. I can't promise that most of these chapters won't have smut, but that's what you guys like, right? Right?? Also I know I said I was going to be uploading these already-finished chapters once a week because I don't wanna get your hopes up on how often I'm going to be updating this but I'm way too excited to put these things out there so yeah probably expect these every few days at least for the first 4 chapters (or more because I'm probably gonna start and finish chapter 5 today lol.)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Rhys didn't delete the account. *Obviously.*

The money was just too good to give up. He was raking in credits daily and he still was somehow spending all the extra money quicker than he got it. Yes, the skag skin boots he bought were a little overkill but he deserved them, damn it. Vaughn, of course, didn't approve of this new lifestyle and told him constantly, but Yvette wasn't complaining with all the lunch she was being treated to. And dinner. And drinks at their favorite bar they were currently seated at.

"This is the smartest decision you've ever made, Rhys," Yvette said as she sipped on something fruity and expensive that she took the liberty of putting on Rhys' tab. Rhys gave her a smirk and some finger guns as he picked up his equally fruity and expensive drink and lead them over to a table.

"I know, I know. And I have you to thank for it, Yvette. What would I do without you?" Rhys crooned, batting his eyelashes at her. Vaughn snorted loudly as he clanked his bottle of beer down onto the table, scooting into the booth next to Yvette because he was petty and didn't want to sit next to Rhys because of his life choices.

"Can we not talk about this? I vote we not talk about this," Vaughn grumbled, chugging most of his beer in one sip.

As if on cue Rhys' phone chimed in that familiar way that they all knew but never talked about. It was just kind of assumed that the distinct beep was from the app where Rhys was making all these extra credits, especially judging by the way he pulled his phone out like his life depended on it. It was the only thing he actually used his phone for, every other message he took through his ECHOeye or on his palm. He had decided not to take these messages through his robotic arm because the screen that popped up was huge and he was getting more dick pics than he'd ever gotten in his life. He didn't use his ECHOeye because, well, dicks look much bigger and more intimidating when they're being projected straight to your brain.



Rhys kept the phone beneath the table just in case, ignoring Vaughn as he complained about Rhys ignoring his friends for sugar daddies and blah blah blah. Rhys opened the message, surprised to see it was someone who hadn't messaged him yet. Rhys had been on the website for about a month now so most of the people he spoke to were more or less 'regulars', if that was the right term. So to be getting a message from someone new was kind of exciting. The message was from **JackDaddy69**:

>hey cupcake, u look like a snack ;)

Rhys snorted but blushed despite himself, his heart rate picking up a little. He always got a little adrenaline rush when he started talking to someone new. Just as Rhys was about to click on the text bubble to reply he was distracted by Vaughn snapping his fingers in front of his face obnoxiously. Rhys crinkled his nose and locked the phone, stuffing it back into his pocket.

"This is like, a job for you now, right? And what do we say about work when we're hanging out?" Vaughn's tone was practically chastising, his face set in a scowl as he crossed his arms across his chest. There was a few moments of silence before Rhys realized he was supposed to respond to that with the correct answer.

Rhys rolled his eyes in the most exaggerated way he could. "No talking about work when you're with friends," his tone was monotonous as he said it, "which also means no thinking about work and especially no *doing* work." Vaughn made a self-satisfied noise and stopped a waitress as she was walking by, ordering them each another round courtesy of Rhys' fancy new bank account.

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By the time they decided to call it a night they were all trashed. Like, stumbling-down-the-street trashed- well, the metaphorical street because space stations don't have streets. Rhys was leaning heavily on Vaughn, an arm slung around his shoulders as they nearly tripped over each others feet. They were laughing and Rhys had no idea why, but it felt good to laugh so he did it anyway. They had already dropped Yvette off at her place and were on their way back to their shared apartment, or at least he hoped they were. He had no idea what was going on right now.

"Y'know, *bro*," Vaughn slurred, adjusting the glasses on his nose, "I- like- I just love you, okay?" It sounded like there was supposed to be more to that statement but Vaughn was cut off by a burp bubbling up in his chest. From the sound of it, Rhys was pretty sure he almost threw up.

"I-" Rhys hiccuped before he took a deep breath to start again, "I love you too, bro. S'just, you don't- you don't *support* me, bro. Why ain't you supportin' me, bro?" Rhys placed a hand on his chest like he was offended, pulling his arm away from where it was wrapped around Vaughn's shoulders. It probably wasn't the best idea to do that considering he stumbled a few steps to the right, bumping into a large potted plant of some kind. He turned around and flipped the plant off without even really seeing what he bumped into but probably assuming it was a person.

"Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait... You- you talkin' 'bout the whole," Vaughn waved his hands in the air in a non-descript way, "sugar baby thing?" Vaughn cocked an eyebrow at his best friend who was currently letting out a very dramatic whine.

"Duh!" Rhys all but shouted, thankful that the late hour had the hallways of Helios practically empty. "Issa... Issa good gig, bro. Lotta money. *Lotta* money. Fer wha'?' Couple *nudes*? Pshh, big whoop." Rhys shrugged like he'd made the most sense he's ever made in his life. Rhys spotted the door to their apartment complex and suddenly realized he had to pee, like, right now. He sped up his pace, his long legs leaving Vaughn shouting for him to wait behind him. He all but slammed his shoulder into the door when he finally reached it, mostly because he couldn't control his momentum in his drunk state and needed the door to bring him to a stop.

“Gotta pee, gotta pee, gotta pee,” Rhys chanted to himself quietly, missing the key card attached to the waistband of his pants three times before he finally got it, pulling on the coiled wire it was attached to so he could scan it to get the door open. There was a loud buzz to let him know he was allowed in and he nearly shoved the door open hard enough for it to slam against the adjacent wall. He didn’t wait for Vaughn to catch up, running up the few flights of stairs it took to get to their unit.

Rhys was doing the pee-pee dance as he fumbled with his key card again, dashing through the front door once he got it open. He didn’t bother to close the bathroom door behind him, too preoccupied with unzipping his fly and pulling his dick out to think about privacy. He let out a loud sigh as he relieved himself, bringing his robotic hand up to brace himself against the wall in front of him.

“Gross! Close the door!” Vaughn shouted from the living room, falling onto the couch with as much grace as a newborn kitten.

Rhys finished using the bathroom and tucked himself back into his pants, flushing the toilet and stumbling over to the big mirror that covered the wall above their double sink. He looked like a damn mess. His normally perfectly styled hair was messy, his cheeks flushed from all the alcohol. His very stylish skinny tie was pulled loose and the top few buttons of his shirt were pulled open, revealing the top of his blue tattoos. He absently ran his flesh fingers over his collarbone, licking his dry lips as he realized just how thirsty he was. Sure, he looked like a mess, but he looked like a *hot* mess. He smirked at his reflection and pulled his phone out of his pocket, suddenly remembering the message from earlier.

Rhys smirked as he read the message over again, mumbling “*cupcake*,” to himself smugly. He glanced up at his reflection again, admiring how his pinstriped slacks did very little to hide his growing bulge; actually, if anything they accentuated it, casting distinct lines to really show off what he’s got.

If there’s one thing Rhys is when he’s drunk, it’s *slutty*. Vaughn had, on more than one occasion, really saved Rhys’ ass at college parties keeping him from sleeping with any guy or girl that paid him any mind. Did Rhys ever mention that he really likes attention? Right, that’s why he had the sugar baby account in the first place- other than the money, of course. So when Rhys was drunk, he was way more needy for attention.

Rhys parted the flap of his slacks more from where he’d never closed them after using the toilet, pushing his hand between his pants and the thin material of his Hyperion yellow boxer-briefs. He barely stifled the moan that threatened to pass through his lips, biting his bottom lip to help conceal his noises. He was pretty sure Vaughn was passed out on the couch if the loud snoring was anything to go by, but it would still be way too embarrassing if he woke his friend up from moaning while he shoved his hand down his pants.

Just in case, Rhys kicked a long leg out to kick the bathroom door shut, wincing at the loud ‘*bang*’ that resonated through the apartment. He waited a few beats to listen for Vaughn’s snoring, relaxing visibly when he heard it. He turned back to himself in the mirror, squeezing himself through his underwear with a slutty whimper. He gave himself a few slow, deliberate strokes, working himself up enough to get his cock fully hard. He pulled his hand from his pants, licking his lips at the defined line of his hard cock straining against his tight underwear, running his fingertips over the black letters reading ‘*HYPERION*’ across the waistband of them.

Rhys was the absolute definition of debauched right now. He was panting slightly, pink lips parted to let the air in and out, glistening with saliva. There was a distinct wet spot at the tip of his cock where precum had oozed out of the tip, his slacks half sliding off one hip from being unfastened. His shirt was untucked and hanging out of his pants erratically in random places, his sleeves rolled up and

bunched up around his elbows. Honestly, it looked like someone had just ravished the shit out of him, like someone had ran big, warm hands all over his body and effectively messed up his entire outfit. He moaned at the thought, wishing someone *had* done just that to him.

He wasn't sure what made him do it, probably all the alcohol in his system, but he pulled the message up from **JackDaddy69** and opened the camera feature. For fuck's sake he usually had people paying for this kind of content, and here he was throwing it at some guy he hadn't even spoken to yet.

Rhys leaned forward a little so he could brace himself on the countertop with his left hand, the flesh one, so he was bent over *just* a little, leaning a little closer to the mirror than if he was standing up straight. He pulled at the collar of his shirt a little with the hand that was holding his phone so a little more of his tattoos were showing, dropping the phone on the counter for a brief moment so he could at least fix his hair a little by running a hand through it. He scooped his phone up clumsily and flipped the way the camera was facing so it was showing his reflection. He couldn't help but smirk as he snapped the picture, his cock twitching at just how *good* and *confident* he looked in it- yeah, he was definitely a narcissist. He typed out a quick message with fumbling fingers before he sent it with the photo:

>>why don't u take a bite?

Rhys quickly locked his phone and fastened his pants enough that they wouldn't fall down as he hurried to his bedroom, locking the door behind him. He hastily pulled his clothes off and slid into his bed, but not before he wiggled his phone from his pants pocket. He licked a wet stripe across his flesh hand before he gripped his cock, opening his phone to the message thread with **JackDaddy69**, eagerly awaiting a response. He started to slowly stroke his cock, his eyes fluttering shut for a moment as pleasure licked its way up his spine. His eyes snapped open, however, when he felt his phone vibrate in his hand.

>damn, baby. u always give out the goods 4 free?

Rhys blushed at that, enjoying how shameful he felt for the accusation. He gave his dick a firm squeeze before he released it so he could type with both hands.

>>nope, just for u, daddy

He paused, staring at the message he just sent and decidedly not lingering on how much he liked calling this guy daddy. To be fair, he was on a sugar-baby-seeking-sugar-daddy website, so he shouldn't be so surprised that he definitely just found out he might have a real daddy kink. He quickly typed out another message:

>>i showed u mine, u show me yours? ;)

Rhys dropped the phone on the bed next to his head so he could grab his cock again, arching his back into the touch. He used his robotic hand to gently cup his balls, hissing as the cool metal touched his skin. He kind of always liked the initial bite of it, the rough feeling of metal against skin. It made his toes curl and his cock jump in his hand, another bead of precum dribbling out onto his belly.

He wasn't sure how long it took for his daddy to respond, a little lost in the pleasure of his own hand, mewling shamelessly in the dark, the only light in the room coming from the screen of his phone. He'd just reached up with his robotic hand to give his nipples a tight pinch when the phone buzzed against the sheets, making him jump at how close the sound was to his ear. He scrambled for the phone, nearly choking at the picture on his screen.

It was probably the prettiest cock he'd ever seen. *Big*, both long and thick, with a nice curve to it. His mouth practically watered, eyes tracing over the vein on the underside, the big, strong-looking tanned hand gripping the base, a strong, thick arm leading off camera to what he imagined were big biceps and broad shoulders. The man's legs were parted slightly, his legs covered by dark jeans, his underwear bunched up beneath his balls where he must have pulled them down just enough to give Rhys the stunning view. His shirt was hiked up enough that it was out of view, revealing tight, tan abs that Rhys wanted to run his tongue over. The man had a tattoo on the wrist of the hand that was holding his cock, what looked like two gears linked together looped around the tan skin. Rhys could have sworn that tattoo looked strikingly familiar but his drunk-clouded mind couldn't quite place it.

Rhys was admittedly disappointed how cropped the photo was, leaving out vital pieces of the man's body that he wanted- no, *needed* to see. Pieces such as his chest and shoulders and neck and, most importantly, his face. He could only imagine how good-looking this guy had to be with a body- and cock- like that. He moaned at the mere sight of it, his hand picking up pace where it had momentarily forgotten to stroke his weeping cock in his stupor. He parted his legs further where they were bent at the knee on his bed, thrusting his hips up into the too-dry fist.

>>wow. that's...

>>ur cock is amazing

Not the most eloquent thing he's ever said but between the booze and the horniness he couldn't exactly think straight. He dropped his phone onto his chest with a wet '*slap*', his skin tacky with sweat. He fumbled in his bedside drawer for a moment before he pulled out the pump bottle of lube he had in there, pumping some out onto his hand before he gripped his cock again. He keened at the newfound wetness, shuddering at the obscenely wet noises that echoed through the room as he started to stroke his cock with fervor. He started to squeeze and twist each time his fist made it to the head of his cock, closing his eyes as he pictured the bulky, tanned body from the photo above him. His phone vibrated two more times before he picked it up.

>ur not wrong, princess

>can't help but notice u were wearing clothes in ur pic tho

Rhys flushed from what felt like head to toe, glancing down at his slick cock. Though not as big as the one from the photo, his cock was definitely a good size. Long but not too girthy, and definitely pretty. His cock was red with how hard he was, glistening in the light from his phone. He rubbed his thumb over the slit and shuddered, biting at his bottom lip softly. Okay, technically speaking, he should *definitely* be charging this guy for a picture with no clothes, but how could he say no to a dick like that?

Rhys quickly shuffled on the bed until he was sitting up on his haunches, calves tucked beneath him. He had to close his eyes for a second to compose himself, the heat of his room mixed with the dizziness of booze making the world spin for a second. Once he composed himself he looked down at the phone in his robotic hand, pushing his knees farther apart against the sheets so his legs were spread obscenely.

He brought the phone down so he was holding it vertically against the bed, tapping the camera button so he could see himself. He was just barely an outline in the darkness, the glow of his phone the only thing illuminating him. He shuffled around a little bit to make sure his whole body was in the frame, or at least until he assumed his whole body was in the frame- he couldn't really tell in the dark. He parted his lips just slightly and arched his back a little, splaying his free hand across a milky thigh.

With the angle it was almost impossible for him to reach the button to take the photo, so instead he

blinked his ECHOeye, activating it to interface with the phone. With a swift blink he took the picture, the flash lighting up the room in a bright glow for a few seconds. Once the photo popped up on his phone all he could think is *Goddamn I'm good looking*. Even though the flash of the camera made him look even paler in the dark it made his tattoos stand out all that more, his cock standing proud and shiny with lube in the light. Since he'd used his ECHOeye to snap the picture his eyes were half lidded in the midst of a blink, the blue one shining bright from where it was activated.

He looked, well, *easy*, all spread out and arched with red, puffy, glistening lips parted in a silent moan. His eyes were the definition of 'sex eyes' and just as he hit send he remembered his one rule he'd set for himself about sending this pictures- *no face*. Yes, you could obviously see his face in his innocent profile pictures, but he'd made it a point to set the rule that if he was naked in any pictures he was always to crop out his face. His tattoos were kind of a dead giveaway that it was him regardless, but it made him feel better that if these pictures did get into the wrong hands that they at least wouldn't have his face to identify him. (He told himself he could always just get his tattoos laser removed in a pinch.)

Well, guess that rule flew out the window.

Thankfully, for his and his anxiety's sake, Rhys was too drunk to think about it too much. He placed his phone on the bed in front of him, tapping on the picture of that *magnificent* cock before he grabbed his own again, toes curling as he picked up the rhythm he'd abandoned. He pictured that big cock spearing him, spreading him open and fucking into him with purpose. He pictured those big, strong hands grabbing his hips for leverage, leaving bruises in their wake. The moan that escaped him was filthy and he was glad but also kind of disappointed no one was around to hear it.

Rhys was close, his balls tightening up closer to his body with the threat of release. He leaned forward to prop himself up on the bed with his robotic hand, half bent over his phone. Five, maybe six tight strokes, a few twists of his wrist and he was coming, moaning '*daddy*' softly as he painted his phone and the picture on it with his cum. He was left panting, thighs trembling slightly below him as he stroked himself through his orgasm until he was just shy of too-sensitive.

Just then a new message popped up and even though Rhys could hardly keep his eyes open he tapped the banner that dropped down from the top of his phone to bring him to the message. He absently wiped his dirtied hand on the sheets before he pushed himself back until he was flopping down onto his bed on his back, phone in hand. He smirked at the message, pride swelling up in his chest.

>i think i like u, pumpkin

—

When Rhys woke up in the morning he almost puked for more than one reason. First, because he was grossly hungover and wanted to die. His head was throbbing and his stomach was doing flips, making him groan and roll over to shove his face into his pillow. This brought him to the second reason he wanted to puke- he was sweaty and sticky and covered in his own dried cum. He let out a loud whine as he felt the stiffened skin pull from his movements, shuffling onto his side so he could look at the white, crusty streaks on his stomach and chest.

"*Gross*," he whimpered, wincing at the pain that shot through his skull just from talking. He tried to recall what happened the night before, a blurry memory of him and Vaughn walking home surfacing. So he didn't bring a stranger home, that was good. He squeezed his eyes shut tight trying to remember something past that but he was drawing a blank. Hell, he couldn't even remember leaving the damn bar which should have coincided with walking home but nope, that memory was just *poof*, gone.

It was a relief knowing he came home, clearly jerked off by himself, and then passed out before he could even clean himself off. It made him feel sad and lonely, but at least he didn't get slutty. He laid there in silence for a few, long minutes, until the feeling of dry cum and dry mouth were too much to ignore. He slinked off the bed pathetically, cursing when his phone slid off the bed and onto his foot painfully. He hobbled his way over to the pile of clothes he must have pulled off last night, grabbing his underwear so he could pull them on and tip-toe to the bathroom in the hallway as fast as he could.

Waiting on the counter for him was a bottle of water and a bottle of pain killers, because Vaughn was the best bro that there ever was. He turned the shower on, chugged the water and two pills, and promptly sat his ass in the shower and let the warm water consume him.

Suddenly, a memory flooded back to him, causing his head to whip forward from where he had it propped against the wall of the shower and his eyes snapped open. He forced back the nausea the movement caused, trying to focus on the memory. Someone new messaged him last night... Had he answered? Oh god, what did he say if he did? He brought his hands up to curl his fingers in his hair as if he was trying to pull the memory free. Vaughn was right all along, this whole sugar baby business had been a bad idea. What if he gave the guy his address? What if he was waiting outside the bathroom door *right now*?

Rhys took a deep breath and let go of his hair, exhaling loudly through his nose. "Calm down, Rhys," he murmured to himself, realizing just how out of control those thoughts had gotten. All he had to do was finish his shower and check his phone to see if he'd ever messaged the guy back.

"Or I could just, y'know, use the expensive tech in my brain," he muttered stupidly to himself, rolling his eyes. Sometimes he was just flat out dumb. He blinked his ECHOeye to life, found his phone on the server and nearly *screamed* when the first thing he saw was a very naked picture of himself. "Oh my god I look like such a fuckin-," he cut himself off with a grunt, minimizing the photo so he could look through the other messages. Once he saw he sent not only one, but two pictures of himself he quickly went to check his bank account, frowning at the very high number in red at the top of his statement. "Jeeze, Yvette, I just got a second job, I'm not *rich*," he grumbled, his face only souring more as he failed to see any indication that this new mystery man had paid him at all.

Rhys went back to the messages, scrolling through them a little more carefully to try and see if they'd at least discussed payment. Considering the thread was pretty short it didn't take long to find that the closest discussion of money was when mystery man promptly pointed out that Rhys had given the first photo *for free*. Oh, and if Rhys opened the picture **JackDaddy69** had sent him and stared at it long enough to get a half-chub that was his business. He blinked his ECHOeye off with a frustrated growl, scrubbing at his face with his flesh hand.

"Good job, Rhys, givin' out the goods to complete strangers for free," Rhys chastised himself, pulling himself to his feet so he could actually clean himself while there was still hot water. "It's cool, you can fix this. Just... Message the guy today about payment. Sweeten the deal a little. Yeah, yeah, this could work..." He smirked to himself as he thought up a plan, vivid images playing in his mind as if it were all actually happening already, just the way he wanted.

Once he climbed out of the shower and dried himself off he sling his towel around his hips and sauntered back to his room. If there was one thing he learned from working at Hyperion it was that *acting* confident got you a long way. Confidence could practically will anything into existence. He picked up his phone from where it had fallen on the floor and flopped down onto his bed. He started typing a new message:

>>heya, daddy ;)

>>hope you liked what you saw last night~  
>>usually i charge but i was feeling generous~~  
>>if you want, i can send a couple more for just 100 credits each  
>>i'll give you the discount price for having such a nice cock  
>>just let me know

After the last message followed a bunch of winking kissy faces, the guys on this website at that shit up. With a final smirk Rhys locked his phone only for it to vibrate almost as soon as he'd locked it. He blinked curiously at the screen before he opened the messages:

>ur funny, kiddo  
>i don't pay for nudes  
>but nice try

And, to add insult to injury, the last message was followed by a bunch of winking kissy faces. Rhys stared at the messages incredulously, mouth hanging open in shock. He sat up quickly, squeezing his eyes shut at the throbbing in his head before his face twisted into a scowl.

"Who does this guy think he is?!" Rhys said angrily to his phone, shaking it in his hands, wishing it was the guy's neck he was clutching like a vice. Most of this was definitely Rhys' fault for sending the pictures for free in the first place but he wasn't about to admit that. He was just about to type something nasty when another message popped up:

>but i'll pay for a show

"What the hell does that mean?"

"Who the hell are you talking to?!" Came Vaughn's shout from what Rhys guessed was the living room. Rhys turned his scowl to his closed bedroom door, a Hyperion propaganda poster with Handsome Jack's face on it staring back at him, the words '*Our Future is Your Future*' encircled around the CEO's head. Rhys decided to not warrant Vaughn with a response, instead directing his attention back to his phone.

>>excuse me?

Rhys didn't care how quickly he got an answer this time, locking his phone and throwing it onto his pillow like the pissy little bitch he was. He stood up and dropped his towel, digging through his drawers for some comfortable clothes. It was Saturday, he was hung over, and so was his best friend. His plans for the day were to sit on the couch, order take-out, and play video games until their eyes bled. He'd be damned before he let some dick on the ECHOnet ruin his day for him.

Adorned with a fresh pair of underwear, his most comfortable pair of sleep shorts, and a worn, old yellow Hyperion shirt, Rhys headed out to the living room and sunk down onto the couch next to his best friend. He must have still had an annoyed look on his face, though, judging by the way Vaughn was looking at him with a quirked eyebrow.

"You alright, bro?" Vaughn asked, reaching into a box that was sitting on the coffee table and pulling out a doughnut that he handed to Rhys because Vaughn was his favorite person in the whole world. "I mean, other than the terrible hang overs we're both going to be nursing today."

Rhys' face softened a little at the treat he was offered, taking it in his flesh hand before taking a big bite. He gagged around it, his still-nauseated stomach trying to tell him '*no, please, for the love of god, don't put anything else in me*'. He chewed through it, knowing the first few bites were always the hardest, but also knowing the doughy goodness would soak up all the lingering alcohol in his

stomach and lead him onto a road of recovery.

“Just *peachy*, bro,” Rhys mumbled around a mouthful of doughnut, a full-body shiver running through him as he forced himself to swallow. He took a deep breath through his nose before he cringed through another bite.

“I’m just gonna assume this has to do with the thing I refuse to talk about and continue to not talk about it,” Vaughn said with a sideways glance at Rhys as he kicked his feet up onto the coffee table, nudging the box of doughnuts towards his best friend.

“Yup, sounds about right,” Rhys said, picking up one of the two controllers already sitting on the coffee table as Vaughn booted up the system.

—

Hours upon hours of video games and a large order of Truxican take-out later and the pair were actually starting to feel almost normal again. Rhys fought long and hard to keep his curiosity about the last message he’d read from mystery man squashed down but it was finally starting to eat at him (AKA his anxiety) too much. Vaughn had just paused the game they were playing to use the bathroom so Rhys took the opportunity to pull his phone out, annoyed at the excitement that bubbled up in his chest when he saw he’d gotten an answer.

>u got a echocam?

That’s it, that’s all the message said. He stared at it for a long time, long enough to notice that the message had just been sent only a few seconds ago and for some reason that pissed Rhys off to no end. “Asshole probably thinks I’m so damn *eager* to read his messages,” he grumbled quietly to himself, making a mental note to turn off read receipts at some point. He jumped a little as he heard the toilet flush, typing up a message quickly so Vaughn didn’t see him on the app when he got back.

>>yeah, so?

He shoved the phone between two of the couch cushions just as Vaughn rounded the couch, tossing a cold water bottle to Rhys. He caught it with a little help from his cybernetic arm because he definitely hadn’t been ready for that, cracking it open to take a swig.

“You wanna binge on ECHOflix?” Rhys practically made heart eyes at Vaughn’s suggestion, leaning on his best friend shoulder-to-shoulder with an adoring sigh.

“You know the way to my heart,” Rhys said dreamily, grunting as Vaughn smacked him in the face with an erratic wave of his hand to get Rhys off of him. Rhys scooted to the other end of the couch so he was propped up against the arm of it, leaning over the edge to pull a blanket from the blanket basket Vaughn had bought at some home goods store. Rhys had made fun of him for it but had come to love the simple little luxury of always having a blanket at his fingertips. Someone as lanky as him was always cold. He wrapped the blanket around himself and threw an end to Vaughn who only tucked his feet under it.

Naturally it took them forever to pick something because half the fun of ECHOflix was scrolling through every genre mindlessly. Rhys had wanted to watch a Handsome Jack docu-series, to which Vaughn had said, “Barf,” and made fun of Rhys’ creepy obsession with the Hyperion CEO. Rhys made equal fun of Vaughn when he suggested a rom-com because Vaughn’s love of chick-flicks was never not hilarious. They ended up settling on an animated kid’s movie because they agreed it was the furthest thing from both of their suggestions.



Vaughn fell asleep halfway through while Rhys cuddled farther under his blanket, using Vaughn's prone sleeping form to stretch out his long legs across his lap. Rhys was just drifting to sleep himself, a little drool soaking into the throw pillow he had his head propped up on, when a vibration directly under his ass caused him to jerk awake. He shoved his hand between the cushions tiredly, having forgotten he'd tucked his phone away out of his friend's view. He pulled out a sock and some loose change before he finally managed to grab the phone, barely registering the messages he read there.

>sooo, put on a show, dumdum

>ull make more \$\$ with a cam show than selling nudes

Rhys was mostly out of it now that his body had realized that drunk sleep was not real sleep and that nap sleep was good sleep. See? His own thoughts were getting stupider by the second. All his brain had the power to message back was:

>>i like \$\$

## Chapter End Notes

Rhys is a drunk slut (and maybe just a slut in general) you can't convince me otherwise.

Also, please excuse Rhys' atrocious text etiquette, he's drunk. Can't say the same for Jack, he's just a lazy asshole.

## Chapter 3

### Chapter Summary

Rhys makes a realization about himself and finally takes JackDaddy69 up on that advice.

### Chapter Notes

EDIT: Check it out!!! @champion if dogs made some awesome fan art! Find it here: <https://twitter.com/championofsin/status/1165711563224965121?s=21>

Did I mention all chapters are unbeta'd? Please keep this in mind.

Couple things about this chapter:

\*Yup, there's an OC in this character but I promise it's just in passing. the only time I'll ever include OC's is for very specific purposes, they just exist for key points.

\*Nisha is only mentioned in this chapter but she'll be coming into play for realz later

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“And all you said back was... ‘I like money’?” Yvette’s voice was *incredibly* judge-y. In Rhys’ opinion, way too judge-y for the person whose idea this was in the first place.

Rhys let out a pathetic groan, hiding his face in his hands. He was out to lunch with Yvette, *just* Yvette, because god knows Vaughn would be absolutely livid at the topic of conversation. Honestly, he probably wouldn’t have even allowed them to have the conversation if he was there. Which lead Rhys to invite Yvette on a secret lunch date (that Rhys was treating her to with the promise of five more free lunches under the prospect that Yvette didn’t tell Vaughn about anything they were to discuss).

“In my defense, I was hung over and falling asleep. What *I* said isn’t the point. It’s what he said that’s the problem because I can’t get it out of my head and it’s almost been a week already.” Rhys peeked at Yvette through his fingers only to hide behind them again when he saw the scowl she was giving him.

*Obviously* he knew this was a bad idea. And not like sending nudes to strangers on the ECHOnet bad idea. This was a whole new level of bad idea that he shouldn’t have even been entertaining. But Mr. Magnificent Cock was making Rhys want to do things he couldn’t even fathom. Actually, he could fathom them. He’d fathomed them a few times in the shower since the idea surfaced and was almost disgusted by how turned on he was by the idea of getting off in front of a camera while people watched. Live.

“Look, Rhys, I know I got you into this mess but... This is a whole other level of dirty money, if you catch my drift.” Rhys decided Yvette was not helping.

“I know!” Rhys groaned, picking up his fork and stabbing at his salad angrily. “Then why do I want

to do it so bad?" He mumbled quietly, almost as if he didn't want Yvette to hear it. Some sick part of him wanted to... Impress? No, prove this guy wrong. He wanted to show him that Rhys was worth paying for which should have seemed like a prideful thing to feel but really it just made him feel more like a prostitute than he already did.

"Uh, maybe because you're a slut, Rhys," Yvette quirked an eyebrow like it was the obvious answer, pointing her chopsticks at Rhys accusingly. Rhys glared at the offensive utensils, his face burning red with a blush. "Stop pouting, it's true." Rhys hope she choked on the piece of sushi in her mouth.

Rhys straightened out his lips into a thin line from the puffed-out pout he'd been giving, letting out an exaggerated sigh. "I'm a *drunk* slut, Yvette. I can at least live with that. I can't be an all-the-time-slut, that's just... Embarrassing," Rhys said, shame written all over his face. Rhys didn't have a problem with sluts or the prospect of being one, he just didn't like how incredibly desperate it made him feel. It didn't help he hadn't had a good lay practically since college. Yvette liked to remind him, of course she did, that he had unrealistic expectations of what a 'good lay' was and that picturing Handsome Jack while getting railed by the average human would certainly sour a sexual experience.

In his defense, most of the men on Helios were below average in the sex department. The women were okay, but that was really only because Rhys was the one dominating that situation and a lot of the women on Helios were total freaks in bed. Probably something about having to be strong and independent just to survive on this space station. Take Yvette, for example. She was probably the strongest, most independent woman he knew. She didn't take any shit from anyone.

But the men? They were all either wimpy or over-compensating. Rhys liked to be dominated when he was with a man, liked to be held down and told what to do while he got railed like there was no tomorrow. Which, yeah, probably explained his mild-obsession (*extreme* obsession if you were asking Vaughn or Yvette) with Handsome Jack. He just seemed like the type of guy- no, he definitely, one-hundred percent was the type of guy who would hold Rhys down and just fucking *use* him.

"Maybe I am an all-the-time-slut," Rhys said sadly to his salad, his reflections on how he liked it in bed giving him a clear scope on his slutty-ness. It made sense, no self-preserving person would sell naked pictures of themselves and *like* it.

"The first step to recovery is admitting you have a problem," Yvette said in a mock-serious tone, reaching across the table to place her hand over the one Rhys was using to futilely stab at a grape tomato. Rhys glared up at her from under his eyelashes, his lips pushing out into a pout again.

"You're--"

"*I know I'm pouting again,*" Rhys hissed, finally stabbing his fork through the elusive tomato almost hard enough to break the plastic fork. Yvette held her hands up in front of her, palms out defensively.

Yvette sighed and rolled her eyes dramatically and clicked her chopsticks together twice. "Rhys, I know you. If you want to do it you're going to do it, regardless of anyone else's opinion. I wouldn't say I'm... Against it, I'm just saying be careful. Since I know you're going to end up doing it anyway, it's just a matter of now or later, then I'm going to support you. You have to be able to talk to one of us, and there's no way in hell Vaughn would *ever* be okay with this."

She was right and she knew it, Rhys knew it, everyone knew it. If Rhys had been thinking about doing it for this long he knew he was going to give in eventually and just do it. At least this way he had Yvette to talk to about it, that way if he went missing or got any creepy stalkers she would know why and would, hopefully, be able to help.

Rhys let out a relieved sigh, “thanks, Yvette. Look at it this way, you’ll probably never have to buy yourself another meal again.” Rhys winked at her with a sly grin and the way her face lit up should have made him mad but he could only laugh.

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It was another full two weeks before Rhys got up enough courage to dig out his ECHOcam from the bottom of a drawer he must have shoved it into when he moved into their apartment. He gazed down at it in his hand, turning it over a few times thoughtfully. He hadn’t heard from Mr. Magnificent Cock since he’d said, ‘*i like \$\$*’, which made him kind of nervous. If he ended up going through with this and **JackDaddy69** didn’t show up on his feed, well, then what was the point?

Rhys hadn’t exactly reached out either, but why would he? Clearly this guy wasn’t going to be paying for content unless it was streaming so it’s not like Rhys wasn’t going to bother sending him anymore pictures for free. He had one goal for all of this: make money. The whole ego-stroking thing was just a bonus, not a motive.

“I’m heading out, bro!” Vaughn’s voice echoed through the apartment, making Rhys jump and shove the ECHOcam back into his drawer and promptly slam it closed.

“O-Okay!” Rhys called back, surfacing from his room so he could give Vaughn a proper send-off. He was going on a date with a girl he worked with in accounting. Vaughn had seemed super excited about it when he’d told his best friend, going as far as to show Rhys pictures of her. She was cute, definitely Vaughn’s type. From the pictures he saw she seemed to be about the same height as Vaughn, a little chubby but in the right places. Dark hair and eyes, glasses. She looked innocent as hell, probably a book worm if she was anything like the other girls Vaughn had dated throughout their friendship. Yeah, Vaughn had a *type*.

Rhys whistled at the sight of his best friend, pointing a couple finger guns at him. “Looking snazzy, V-man!” Rhys said, observing his outfit. Black dress pants, burgundy button-up tucked in with the sleeves rolled up because Vaughn wore every shirt like that. He’d skipped his bowtie with Rhys’ suggestion, instead leaving the top two buttons open suggestively. He’d swapped his ECHOglasses for a more sleek, classy pair that didn’t have the dorky attachment on them.

“Don’t... Don’t call me V-man. It makes me sound like a pornstar,” Vaughn said with a cringe, glancing down at his outfit. “I think the second button is too much. It’s too much, isn’t it? It’s definitely too much,” Vaughn rambled, fingers coming up to button up one of the buttons.

“Psh,” Rhys snorted obnoxiously, “no way! It’s perfect. The ladies *love* when you show off a little skin.” Rhys when to undo the button again for him to only get his hand slapped away. “Okay, okay, two buttons are too many. Got it.” Rhys patted his hands on each of Vaughn’s shoulders, straightening out the material. “You look great, bro. Casey-“

“Cathy.”

“*Cathy* is going to totally dig you.” Rhys gave his friend a wink, shooting him with his finger guns again. Vaughn returned them with a sheepish grin.

“Thanks, bro. Wish me luck.”

“Good luck.”

And with that, Vaughn exited the apartment. Rhys took a deep breath when he heard the door click shut behind him, his heart rate sky-rocketing.

It was now or never.

Rhys turned on his heel and took long, quick steps back to his bedroom, slamming the door shut behind him and locking it. His hands were shaking with the adrenaline rush, or maybe it was the nerves, or maybe both. Probably both. He took a steadying breath and got his ECHOCam from the drawer again, tossing it onto his bed next to his laptop. He stared at the tech for a long moment, swallowing thickly.

If he was going to do this it had to be now. Vaughn was going to be on a date for a minimum of two hours, probably longer. It was the perfect time for Rhys to go through with this. With another deep breath he strode over to his bed, sitting with an ankle tucked under the opposite leg's thigh. He pulled his laptop onto his lap, glancing at the screen where he'd already started setting up the page for his... Cam show.

Rhys swallowed nervously at the prospect of such a thing, rubbing a hand down his face. He glanced at the time up at the corner of his laptop, fifteen minutes to the next hour. *Okay, I'll start at the top of the hour*, Rhys thought, nodding in confirmation. He plugged the camera in, accepting all the agreements to allow access to it before the feed blinked to life on his screen. It was pointed at the ceiling right now, laying face-up on his bed. He glanced up at the large, yellow Hyperion flag it was focused on, then around at all the other various Hyperion- namely Handsome Jack- memorabilia littering his room.

"Shit," Rhys mumbled to himself, a blush creeping onto his cheeks. There wasn't an angle he could set himself up at where there wasn't an image of Handsome Jack peeking out. Between the posters and the figurines, the coasters, the shot glass- the *shot glass*. He needed a drink to steady his nerves. He pushed his laptop aside and stood up from the bed, snatching up the shot glass from his desk with Handsome Jack's smirking face on it.

He poured himself a shot of whiskey from the bottle he had that a random co-worker had gotten him for his birthday two years ago. Rhys hated whiskey with a passion and he was pretty sure the gift was a passive-aggressive '*fuck you*', but right now he needed it. He brought the shot up to his lips and cringed at the smell, practically gagging from it. He downed it with a couple coughs as he fanned his hand in front of his mouth as if the gesture would rid him of the taste.

Rhys looked at the picture of Handsome Jack on the shot glass. He imagined Handsome Jack's choice of alcohol was whiskey. Straight, on the rocks. Because Rhys' image of strong masculinity was, naturally, whiskey on the rocks. He licked the drops lingering on his lips away, trying to appreciate the burn in his throat, the warmth that radiated out of his limbs, down to his fingertips and toes.

Thankfully, in some messed up way, Rhys hadn't eaten anything all day from all the nerves he had been having because of the quickly approaching decision he'd made. He was thankful for this because he was a lightweight to begin with, so with nothing in his system he could already feel the calming effect of the alcohol. He was by no means drunk, not even tipsy, he just felt... Relaxed.

He moved back to his bed, returning his attention to the task at hand. He set a notification to be sent out to all of his followers that let them know he'd be starting his first-ever cam show in- he glanced at the clock- thirteen minutes. A little checkmark popped up to indicate that the notifications and, subsequently, invitations had been successfully sent. He checked to make sure the feed of his camera wasn't live yet before he clipped it to the top of his laptop, flinching at how close his face was on the screen.

It was at that moment he realized he had no idea what he was doing. He'd never done anything like this before, not even for a significant other (no matter how much that one boyfriend in college tried to

get him to). He didn't even know where to start! Should he take his clothes off now? Or should he strip for the viewers? Speaking of viewers, he blushed as he saw the number in the corner already ticking up, people literally waiting to see him on camera. He didn't know if that made him more nervous or gave him confidence.

Rhys decided to strip down to his underwear before hand, deeming it too embarrassing to try and do a strip tease. Luckily he was wearing a simple pair of navy blue boxer briefs today, not anything embarrassing. Still, he found himself in his underwear drawer, but not for underwear. He pushed the underwear he had in the right-hand corner of the drawer aside to reveal his collection of sex toys, his cock giving an interested twitch when he saw them.

It wasn't so much a collection as it was a small reserve. Rhys was single, after all, there was only so much he could do to himself. He glanced over the toys, licking his lips as he decided on the simple suction-cupped dildo. He figured it was fitting enough for a first time showing, the skin tone a few shades darker than Rhys' own. The fact that it was a 300 credit sex toy that was a limited edition replica of Handsome Jack's dick was nobody's business; it was also nobody's business that it was his favorite.

He squeezed the base of the soft, high-quality silicon before he covered up the other sex toys again and closed his drawer. When he got back to his laptop he saw he had ten more minutes and the amount of people in the lobby was *still* going up. Regretfully, he skimmed through the list of usernames there, seeing many he knew but also many he'd never seen before. Who he didn't see, more importantly, was **JackDaddy69**.

Rhys crinkled his nose and picked up his phone, going to his messages with the elusive man. He noticed that he hadn't been following him, therefore didn't receive a notification nor an invitation. Well, he needed to fix that. He dropped his phone and opened a new tab on his computer, going into his messages on the desktop site. He copied the invitation link and pasted it into his messages with **JackDaddy69**, hitting send before he could get too nervous. Then he typed out a message:

>>took your advice

He topped the message off with one winking kissy face. He went back to the screen with his still-not-live ECHOcam feed, pushing the laptop away from him so he wasn't so close. He utilized the next couple of minutes to shift around on his bed to find a good place to settle, making sure the angle was flattering but also so he had enough room to move around and still be in frame. He glanced at the '*Jack The New Face of Hyperion*' poster through the camera feed, blushing at the idea that Handsome Jack was going to be watching him ride a replica-dildo of his cock on a live stream. Well, it was just a picture of him, but it made Rhys shiver all the same.

Rhys glanced at the clock one last time, only two minutes left and still no response from him. He tried not to look too disappointed, not wanting to have a pout on his face when the stream finally kicked on. He glanced at the chat that was to the right of his video feed, watching as different usernames in various colors flitted up in a never ending scroll of really dirty (and some really creepy) words.

Just as the minutes ticked from 59 to 00 he saw it, a blush rising high on his cheeks. There, in neon yellow was the username he'd been waiting to see.

**JackDaddy69:** heya, kitten

*Fuck*, yes. Rhys did it, he got the pompous asshole to pay to see him in action. He fought very hard with himself to not shove his fist into the air in victory now that his feed was live. Just as quickly as the message was there it was gone, the litany of other comments pushing it up and out of the chat.

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Jack kicked his feet up onto his desk, leaning back in his large, extremely comfortable yellow- for lack of a better term- *throne*. The work day had been over three hours ago but only just ended for him about thirty-seconds ago. He'd just finished putting out fires, both figuratively and literally, at the Wildlife Exploitation Preserve. The literal fires had been in the stalker sector, the figurative ones were the idiots who started the fire and then, appropriately, were locked in a stalker enclosure to be eaten alive by the invisible little bastards.

Jack had watched the whole thing on live feed. He enjoyed it immensely.

But, now that the fires were out he could relax, which was exactly what he was doing. It was nearly 8 o'clock, he had the large clasps of his vest undone and the white button-up underneath lying open, his yellow Hyperion sweater untucked from his jeans and riding up just a little to let some tanned skin peek out. He was also sipping on the universe's most expensive glass of whiskey, and that was not an exaggeration.

"It feels good to be king," Jack muttered to himself in the emptiness of his office, holding his glass up in a silent cheers to and with himself. He sighed contentedly at the burn of another sip sliding down his throat, running a hand along the length of his mask, fingers lingering at the clasp on his chin thoughtfully.

At that moment his ECHOcomm watch pinged, causing him to tilt his wrist so he could see the face of it. Something dark and wanting shrouded his eyes, his lips quirking up into a devilish smirk when he saw who the message was from. "Well, well, look what we've got here," he murmured, his voice gruff with lust. He removed his feet from the desk so he could lean forward and place his glass on it, tapping the face of the watch.

The screen expanded and projected itself into a larger one, the blue glow illuminating his face in the dimly lit office. When he read over the message his sly smirked stretched into a toothy grin, a rush of heat washing over him. A link, an *invitation* and then:

>>took your advice

Followed by a winking kissy face. "Little shit," Jack grunted, pressing the button on his desk that activated the lock on his office doors.

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After Rhys had gotten his nerves under control and with some encouraging words from the crowd he'd finally gotten himself worked up. He was panting a little, face red and eyes lidded. His cock was straining against his underwear from where he'd been stroking it teasingly through the fabric, occasionally cupping his balls or teasing a finger at his hole. He was sitting up on his knees, legs spread suggestively as he dipped a hand beneath the waistband of his underwear, moaning wantonly as he gripped his cock.

Rhys hadn't gotten a single message from **JackDaddy69** since he'd entered the room, but that was okay. Rhys knew he was there, knew he was watching, that he'd *paid* to watch. It wasn't even the idea of the money itself that had Rhys squeezing his dick tight before he gave it a long stroke, pushing his underwear down around his thighs. It was that this man, too cocky, too *good* to pay for nudes, with his brilliant, amazing cock that Rhys wanted to wrap his lips around and suck, had given in and paid just to see *Rhys*.

The idea had him bucking his hips into his hand, a soft moan of, "*daddy*," pushing past his lips as he

ran his thumb over the slit, smearing the precum there. He hadn't realized his eyes had closed until he was cracking them open, his heart hammering as he caught the neon yellow once again, dashing its way up the screen.

**JackDaddy69:** finger urself

Rhys let out a choked noise, his cock twitching with the want to *obey*. He licked his lips and glanced at the dildo tucked away off screen, then back at the chat where the little command had already disappeared. He swallowed and sat down on the bed, sticking his legs out so he could pull his underwear off the rest of the way. He tossed them onto the floor, shivering at the praise that showered over him in the chat.

He reached off camera to grab the bottle of lube propped up next to the dildo, squirting some onto his fingers and rubbing it around to coat them. He scooted back a little farther on his bed so he was propped up on his pillows, pulling the laptop with him. He spread his long, thin legs that everyone in the chat was complimenting, presenting himself to all the invisible eyes burning into his flesh. He brought his cybernetic hand down to hook under his thigh and grip a soft, round cheek, pulling the plump flesh to give a better view of the tight, pink hole there.

Rhys dug the yellow and black digits into the flesh, his cock twitching at the slight bite of pain it brought. His flesh hand dipped down between his legs, his middle finger circling the tight ring with a soft sigh trembling past his lips. His toes curled as he pushed the digit in, the familiar pressure making his eyes flutter shut. He pushed in to the last knuckle before he started working the lone finger in and out of himself, moving onto a second rather quickly in his lust.

He moaned at the second intrusion, clenching around the fingers with a whimper. God, he wanted a cock in him so bad- a real one, not the imitation lying next to his laptop. He wanted to be fucked into without mercy, a hand around his throat, pressing just shy of too hard. He spread his legs a little farther, pumping the two digits rhythmically, back arching slightly off the bed. He started to scissor them, getting himself ready for the third finger, curling them *just* right with a shout of, "oh *fuck*," as he hit his prostate. His cock gave a threatening jolt, precum smearing against his belly just below his navel.

He pushed into the spot again with a whine, using the flood of pleasure to press his third finger in. His body tensed for a second at the stretch, then relaxed again as he stroked over the bundle of nerves a third time, his mouth falling open and his head thumping back against the wall. Fuck, he was close already. He twisted his fingers so the temptation of fucking his prostate until he came was out of reach, working the fingers into himself over and over and over again.

His eyes flicked to the chat under hooded eyelashes, moaning at all the praise and encouraging words there. Things like 'good boy' and 'yeah, come for daddy' flashed on the screen, and Rhys had to close his eyes so he didn't do just that. He gave himself a few more earnest thrusts of his fingers before he felt loose and ready enough to take something bigger. He pulled his fingers free with a slutty moan, his tongue lolling out from between his parted lips for a moment before he bit his bottom lip.

Rhys shuffled back onto his knees, bracing himself on his cybernetic arm as he leaned forward to reach for the waiting dildo. Once he pulled it on-screen a wave of embarrassment crashed over him for a fleeting moment before it dissipated just as quickly as it came.

—

Damn, this kid was fucking *hot*. Jack was leaning back in his throne again, legs parted where he was stroking his cock lazily. He wanted nothing more than to take up an aggressive pace and come all



over his fist, but his desire to see what this kid had in store 'til the end was more enticing than his looming orgasm. He was also getting off on the clear obsession the kid had with him, his face clearly presented behind the thin form as a poster on his bedroom wall. Which, how fitting, a fanboy helplessly jerking off in front of a camera with Handsome Jack watching, figuratively and literally, and he didn't even know it.

But seriously, it was like this kid was made to do this. All thin and pale and *long*, the flush on his skin so bright compared to the light shade of the rest of him. The sounds he was making were downright filthy and definitely worth the thousand credits he'd spent to watch the show. He was a little outraged at first because seriously, who did this kid think he was? Asking Handsome freakin' Jack to pay for nudes and then charging a *thousand* credits to watch him rut against his hand in his underwear. Not that he knew who Jack was, but still, the *audacity*.

Right now, though, it was worth it, *so* worth it. Although, it was taking a little longer than he'd wanted to get the show on the road. For fuck's sake, the kid had just pulled his dick out, clearly he was into the build-up. But Jack was not a patient man, so he took it upon himself to speed up the process with a little message:

**JackDaddy69:** finger urself

He sent it with a smirk, shuffling a little in his seat and reaching his free hand out to tilt the holo-screen of his computer towards him a little better. It was a long shot that the kid would even see the message, but judging by the way he'd practically lit up when he saw Jack's first message, those mismatched eyes traveling up, up as the message disappeared off the screen gave Jack the idea that he was on the look out for messages from him specifically.

Predictably, Jack wasn't wrong, his little cam slut's eyes following the message again as he let out what could only be described as a whine, that pretty little cock twitching in interest. Oh yeah, Jack was *good*. He licked his lips in anticipation as the lanky little thing adjusted himself, getting himself comfortable before he started working himself open, and even Jack couldn't stop the grunt of appreciation that slipped through his clenched jaw.

Jack watched with hunger in his eyes, his hand squeezing his cock as if he had that tight ass clenched around him. Jack just wanted to reach through the computer and grab that ass, pound into it without remorse until he was screaming his name. He paused from where he was stroking himself to take another sip of his whiskey, distracting himself from the fantasy before it got too out of hand.

As if the kid's fascination with yours truly couldn't get any better, Jack watched as he pulled what was quite obviously *his dick*. His eyebrows shot up into his hairline as his actual dick twitched because it was definitely hot that this kid wanted to get fucked by him so bad. He couldn't help the thunderous laughter that escaped him, his free hand smacking down on his desk a few times as he bent over slightly in his fit. Oh man, this was way too good. He wouldn't be surprised if this kid had one of the life-size cutouts they had set up in Opportunity just so he could slap the literal replica of his dick on it and ride it into oblivion.

Jack had had his suspicions about his little fanboy being, well, a fanboy when he saw the pictures on his profile. Two of the three had Jack's likeness in them, but he'd chalked it up to company pride. Not that Jack didn't think there were people out there who were obsessed with him. He *knew* there were plenty of people out there thirsting after him, writing on fan sites and getting their jollies off to pictures of him. Actually, he was pretty sure most of Helios had Handsome Jack fantasies, there was a reason he'd agreed to taking an *Engorge!* pill so they could take a mould of his, frankly spectacular, cock and sell it for a ridiculous amount of money. There was a *market* for that shit.

And, clearly, this kid was in that market. Jack's laughter had finally subdued, free hand coming up to

wipe at the tears at the corners of his eyes. When he looked back to the holo-screen his little cam boy was facing away from the camera, that bubbly little ass on show. Jack briefly wondered if the kid was staring at the poster of Jack's fact he was now face-to-face with, imagining the real deal lined up with that tight little ass. He only allowed himself to linger on it briefly, however, half because he was going to start laughing again, half because his cock had never been harder.

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Rhys had brought himself back up onto his knees, back to the camera so everyone could see his amazing ass. He was proud of it, okay? It wasn't particularly big or anything, he was way too skinny to have any significant amount of meat on his bones. But it was perky and round and had just enough fat on it to jiggle when he was bouncing on a cock. He knew what the people wanted.

He finished stroking lube onto the dildo before he brought it down between his legs, bracing himself with his robotic arm since it couldn't actually get physically tired, his palm splayed out on the wall—or rather, the poster of Handsome Jack, just to the left of his chin.

Rhys started to lower his hips until he had the dildo lined up with his tight entrance, rolling his hips one, two times so the lubed-up toy pushed between his cheeks suggestively. He gripped the base of the toy tighter as he started to lower himself on it, his head dropped between his shoulders with an open-mouthed whine as the head started to push past the tight ring.

His toes curled beneath him, the stretch pushing deeper, deeper until he was seated fully on the toy, his hand pressed firmly between his ass and the bed. He settled there for a few moments so he could adjust, clenching around the toy obscenely so the camera could see. He lifted his head to glance over his shoulder at the camera, biting his bottom lip as he started to lift himself up, eyes rolling into the back of his head as he sank back down.

He carried on like this for a little bit, slow, deliberate thrusts, his panting loud in his ears. It wasn't long before it wasn't enough, his hips cocking back so he could snap them up and down on the dildo faster. Before he knew it he was pushing off the wall, straight-up bouncing on the dildo between his legs, his hands switching position so he could hold the dildo with his cybernetic one and stroke himself with the flesh one.

There was a litany of moans and pleas escaping his lips, his cybernetic hand starting to pump the dildo into him to meet his downward thrusts, pulling out on his upward ones. Soft whimpers of, “*please,*” and, “*more,*” echoed through the room, his mouth hanging open when he screamed, “*daddy!*” as he felt the head of the thick cock in him slam into his prostate.

Rhys had his head tipped back in complete ecstasy, his skin prickling with goosebumps and sweat and the phantom heat of invisible eyes watching him. He was close, he was *so* close, the hand on his cock squeezing the base tightly to stave off his orgasm just a bit longer.

Rhys whined as he stopped thrusting the dildo inside of him, his hips slowing to a stop before he pulled the toy out completely. He shifted so he was propped up against his pillows again so everyone watching could see everything. He just didn't think it was fair of he came off-camera. He pushed the toy back into himself with a breathy moan, flesh hand grabbing his cock.

It took a few thrusts before he got the angle right, the toy hitting his prostate with each hard thrust. The hand on his cock was moving just as quickly as the one pumping the dildo into him, clearly only having his own release in mind at this point. He let himself drift into fantasy as his eyes closed, picturing a strong body above him, muscular and tan and *fuck* that cock from the picture. Naturally, as most of his fantasies went, it was Handsome Jack's face above him, biting his jaw, pulling his hair, whispering filth in his ear.

Rhys remembered the tattoo on the wrist of the hand that gripped the cock he couldn't stop thinking about, pictured it on the wrist of the hand he fantasized wrapping around his throat. His lips parted in a silent scream as he got closer, closer, only to release a perfectly audible scream as he came, painting himself with thick spurts of cum that reached as high as his chin. The orgasm wrecked through his body without remorse, his thighs trembling and he swore he went deaf for a minute, the only sound in the room coming from the blood rushing through his veins.

Rhys wasn't sure what exactly he'd screamed when he came, too lost in the pleasure to know anything more than the hand pumping his cock and the press of the dildo against his prostate. When he finally started to come down from the high his legs slumped against the bed, the arch of his back relaxing into a straight line again. He was staring blankly up at the Hyperion flag on his ceiling, wondering somewhere in the back of his mind the last time he'd come that hard.

He blinked the tears from his eyes and slowly pulled the dildo out with a hiss, legs snapping shut with the sensation. He dropped the dildo onto the bed, giving himself a few more moments to recover before he sat up, winking at the camera and blowing a kiss before he ended the feed.

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Jack wasn't sure if it was more hot or weird to watch his cock get rode into oblivion while he was actively not getting fucked. He decided it was more hot, his head tipped back against the chair as he struggled to keep his eyes open through the pleasure of his own fist. He didn't want to miss a second of it, that tight ass bouncing on a dildo of *his* cock, ripping moans and whines from those swollen lips. Christ, those looked like amazing dick-sucking lips.

This kid could ride a fucking cock, that was for sure. He had a pace and eagerness that rivaled Nisha's, and damn if Jack didn't wish those hips were on top of him, riding his cock like no tomorrow. This had to have been one of Jack's best ideas ever, getting the dirty little minx on his screen to put on a show. Jack glanced at the amount of people watching, the little number in the corner taunting him. He should have made the kid sign a contract that fucked him out of most of the money he was making off this because *holy shit* it didn't take a genius to do that math. Of course, it was nothing compared to the money Jack pulled in, but for someone who looked like he was only a few years out of college it was definitely a feat.

Jack let out a growl as soft moans of *'please,' 'more,'* and *'daddy'* came through the speakers, pretending the startling number of people weren't watching and that those moans were for him and him alone. He pulled his hand from his cock just long enough to lick a stripe up his palm before he returned it, hissing as he bucked his hips up into the wet heat. He focused on where the dildo was pumping in and out of that tight ass, each outward pull tugging at the rim just a little before it was slammed back in.

"Sweet mother of *fuck*," Jack cursed, eyes flicking up to the curved line of that pale back, the tattoo on his neck, the fucked-out look on his face where he had his head turned to look over his shoulder right into the camera. For a second it was almost like their eyes met, and Jack had to squeeze the head of his cock like a vice so he didn't come. He took a few deep breaths to help calm himself and thank fuck the kid seemed like he was slowing down, no, *stopping*. The fuck?

Jack watched curiously, his hand going back to stroking, slower now, groaning as the cock- *his* cock- popped free before he started to shift around on the bed. "What'cha doin, cupcake?" Jack murmured into the quiet office, eyes tracing the line of the kid's swollen, red cock. A flash of the pictures he'd gotten a few weeks ago danced across his mind, grunting at the memory.

Jack sucked in a sharp breath as he watched the little minx spread his legs and fuck the toy back into him while he fisted his cock in time with the thrusts. His own hand picked up pace, hips starting to

meet each stroke. He watched as those long legs came apart wider and wider, not able to help himself when he growled, “frickin' *slut*,” through bared teeth. And then it was happening, the lithe body coming undone before him, all tensed and arched and shouting a name.

*His name.*

*“Jack!”*

“*Fuckin’-*,” Jack grunted loudly, the word echoing around him. He squeezed his eyes shut tight as he came, his other hand flying out to grip the edge of his desk as his orgasm hit him like a ton of bricks. He stroked himself until his cock was over-sensitive, hand coming away covered in his own release. He looked at the wrecked body on the screen, the way his thighs were trembling and he was *still* moaning and whimpering softly.

Jack was panting so hard his chest was heaving, stars dancing at the edge of his vision. He blindly reached for a drawer in his desk, unable to tear his eyes from the screen, fumbling around in the drawer once he’d gotten the right one open. He used the tissues he’d found there to wipe his hand clean, watching those long legs snap shut with the sensation of being empty. Jack wished it was his cock, the real deal, making those lips whimper from the loss of it.

And then it was over, the kid giving a wink and blowing a kiss before the screen went blank.

*A fucking winking kissy face.*

## Chapter End Notes

Yup, Rhys is definitely a slut. But at least he's a slut with a lot of money.

Hope y'all enjoyed!

## Chapter 4

### Chapter Summary

Rhys gets his first pay-out on his cam show and can't possibly see why he'd ever stop doing this. But then a really long, horrible, stressful week of work and the worst meeting of his life has him pretty sure he'll be too dead to ever do a show again.

### Chapter Notes

This guy's a little shorter but trust me it'll be worth it.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Rhys had never seen so much money in his life. He had been gaping at his bank account all morning in complete awe at just how much he'd made in less than an hour's time. He was frickin' *rich*. Okay, maybe not rich, but there was definitely a lot of zeros dancing across his ECHOeye. Almost sixty people had watched him last night, and at a thousand dollars a pop well... Yeah, that was some math he'd never thought he'd be associating with credits.

"Oh. My. God," Rhys murmured, a grin stretching across his lips. Yvette was not going to believe this. He had to buy her a gift or something, it was the least he could do.

Unable to control his joy, Rhys hopped up from his bed with a triumphant '*whoop*,' thrusting his fist into the air. He glanced at one of the many Handsome Jack posters in his room with a wink, shooting some finger guns at the CEO's likeness. Rhys was in his goddamn prime, baby.

A soft knock to his door had Rhys jumping out of his skin as he quickly scrambled to pull on a pair of underwear and a t-shirt. "What are you so excited about this early in the morning, bro?" Came Vaughn's voice from the other side of the door, guilt suddenly washing over Rhys. Right. Vaughn was home and definitely would not approve of Rhys' reason for celebration.

Rhys hopped on one foot, then the other as he pulled on sweatpants on his way to the door, nearly falling face-first into the wooden surface in his haste. He unlocked it before taking a deep breath, preparing himself for the sensical lie he was about to tell. Vaughn was rubbing his eyes on the other side of the door, glasses pushed up near his forehead. What time was it, anyway? Rhys blinked his ECHOeye back on, surprised to see it was only 8 o'clock. Rhys wasn't typically the early riser, although he was pretty sure he'd passed out pretty earlier after his... Rendezvous.

"Nothing, just pumped I got my eight hours in," Rhys said with a casual shrug, inwardly wincing at the lie. *Real smooth, Rhys*, he thought as he leaned against the doorframe, arms crossed against his chest. "So...? How'd it go?" He asked with a grin, nudging Vaughn with an encouraging elbow. Good deflection.

"Can I at least get some coffee first since you woke me up at this ungodly hour?" Vaughn said tiredly as he punched his friend on the arm, the fleshy one so it would hurt. Rhys winced and shoved him down the hall, following close behind.

“Guess it went well then, huh? You’re not usually this tired in the morning,” Rhys said tauntingly, raising his eyebrows suggestively as Vaughn glared back at him over his shoulder. Maybe he should buy Vaughn a gift, too. Or would that be too suspicious?

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It turned out the date had gone surprisingly well. Not that Rhys didn’t have faith in his best bro, and not that Vaughn didn’t have faith in *himself*, but the two had really seemed to hit it off, judging by the description Vaughn was giving. It had gone so well there was already a second date planned for Friday night. Was Rhys a bad person for getting so excited at the prospect of having the apartment to himself again? The memory of his fat bank account told him no.

Later in the week Rhys told Yvette about how he’d gone through with the cam show, leaving out the part where he was particularly fixated on one of his sugar daddies and his attendance. When he told her just how much money he’d made she’d nearly spit her drink out all over him and demanded a cut of it since it was *her* idea in the first place, to which Rhys had pushed a fancy looking box her way all wrapped in Hyperion yellow wrapping paper and an obnoxiously large bow. If Yvette were a more ardent woman she might have cried and thanked him for the gift. Instead she raised a curious eyebrow at the ECHOcomm watch as if to say, ‘*this will do... for now,*’ before she reminded him of all the free lunches he had promised her a few weeks ago.

And so it continued on like that. Rhys would do cam shows once a week when Vaughn went on dates with Corey- wait, no, Cassidy? Rhys bought Yvette expensive gifts in exchange for her discretion and friendship because Yvette’s friendship always came with a price tag. Vaughn knew nothing of Rhys’ new endeavor even though he had to know something else was up because Rhys’ taste in clothes had gotten *flashy*. But, being the best bro he was- or, rather, not facing the facts that Rhys was practically selling himself- didn’t mention anything.

Rhys had started to get gifts from some of his sugar daddies. Some were simple, things that he genuinely liked such as the amber encrusted ring he wore almost every day or his growing collection of Promethean silk skinny ties; he said simple, not cheap. Others were more... Straight-forward and, frankly, terrifying. Like the massive dildo he wasn’t even sure could fit inside *any* human or the vibrating cock ring (he kind of liked that one, though).

Yvette had helped him set up the PO box where he received all the gifts, because he wasn’t stupid enough to give creepy guys on the internet his address. Also, if Vaughn ever accidentally opened one of them, namely the overtly sexual ones, he’d probably lock Rhys in his room without any technology for a week (including his ECHOeye) just to purge him of his sick desires.

Needless to say, Rhys was a changed man. He strode through Helios with a newfound confidence, adorned with gifts both sent to him and purchased with his fancy new bank account. Oh, and his fancy new bank *card*. It was metal, a sleek black color with trademark Hyperion yellow accents and, you guessed it, Handsome Jack’s face on the front. The only reason he still had his shitty desk job was to not raise suspicion with Vaughn (and, with Yvette’s reminder, that he couldn’t do this *forever*).

To say Rhys was a little disappointed that **JackDaddy69** hadn’t sent him any gifts was an... Understatement. He wasn’t really expecting anything from him considering the guy didn’t even pay for nudes (which was still Rhys’ fault), but a man could hope. Actually, their interaction outside of Rhys’ invitations for his cam shows was pretty minimal. Occasionally, Rhys would get drunk and send him more (free) pictures and get teased about it which he kind of liked in some sick way. Most of the time he got dick pics back at different angles; one time he got a picture of those toned abs splattered with cum, the pearly white fluid dripping down that beautiful cock and onto the man’s

large fist. Rhys jerked off to that picture more than once.

One night, when Rhys wasn't drunk or even horny, he'd messaged the man with a simple 'hey,' and, to his surprised, had gotten a response. He was surprised because for one it was two in the morning, and for two he didn't really get the 'casual conversation' vibe from this guy. But, the simple 'sup' he'd gotten in response made him a little giddy and he squeezed his pillow a little tighter where he was laying on his stomach in bed. He definitely thought way too long and way too hard about what to say next, but he finally settled on:

>>what are you up to?

Rhys tapped back into the game he was playing on the phone because the whole reason he was up at the ridiculous hour was because he couldn't sleep for the life of him. He tapped through a couple more minutes of *Angry Rakks* before he got a response back.

>working

Working? Rhys raised an eyebrow, who the hell was working at two in the morning? That sounded like absolute *hell*. He went back to his game to distract himself so he didn't seem too desperate by answering too quickly, although that lasted about thirty-seconds before he was typing up a new message.

>>why so late?

When he didn't receive a message for a solid five minutes he figured that was probably a stupid question and moved on.

>>can i ask you something?

That was probably as equally a stupid question but whatever. If he didn't get a response it was probably for the better, he needed to go to sleep at some point. Actually, he had started to fall asleep with his phone nearly slipping out of his hands when the vibration jolted him awake.

>well r u going to ask

Rhys flushed and pouted at the unnecessarily rude answer, narrowing his eyes at the too-bright screen.

>>can i see what you look like?

He'd seen what every other one of his sugar daddies looked like from above the waist except for him. It was to the point where it was starting to bother him, mostly because he needed to know just how handsome this guy had to be to have what he still deemed the most amazing cock he'd ever laid eyes on. And with a body like that? He had to be good-looking to be that dedicated to his body.

>nope

Oh. Well, that was disappointing. Rhys rolled onto his back restlessly, huffing at the rejection on his screen. Maybe this guy wasn't as good-looking as Rhys was hoping him to be. Maybe he was over-compensating with all the ab workouts he surely put in and that tan was probably *fake*. Rhys opened one of the many pictures he had saved on his phone to investigate, crinkling his nose at just how natural that tan really did look. Where the hell was this man getting sun from?

>>what, you got an ugly mug or something?

Probably not the best thing to say to someone who was pretty much a paying customer, but after that blatant 'no' Rhys didn't care. Also, he was definitely cranky from being over tired. He had enough people paying him and buying him things, he could afford to lose one if it came down to it.

>hah. good one, princess

Okay, so he wasn't mad, that was a good sign. Rhys tapped his cybernetic index finger against the back of his phone thoughtfully.

>>so why won't you show me, then?

Rhys fell asleep waiting for an answer that he never received.

—

Rhys was having an absolute shit week at work. Like, crap on top of crap on top of crap. Vasquez was getting on his nerves more than usual, constantly walking by his cubicle just to make snide remarks and scare him when Rhys was too enthralled in his work to notice him approaching. Henderson was throwing paperwork at him left and right, constantly letting Rhys know that he needed to get everything done ASAP. He hadn't seen Vaughn in a while because he was spending so much time with Connie and he was pretty sure Yvette was only friends with him for free lunch and expensive gifts now. Oh, and **JackDaddy69** hadn't talked to him since he'd asked to see what he looked like to just put the cherry right on top of his shit sundae.

On top of it all, he had a meeting on practically the opposite frickin' side of Helios that he was all-out sprinting to because he was running late. Henderson had stressed how important the meeting was without actually telling Rhys *why*, which didn't help the anxiety rushing through his veins. Was it the your-promotion-depends-on-it kind of important or the get-here-or-you'll-be-airlocked kind of important?

At first, Rhys burst into the wrong conference room, a bunch of R&D lab coats gawking at him as he interrupted some kind of presentation. He quickly backed out of the conference room with a jumbled apology, cursing when his classic red skinny tie got caught in the closing door and promptly ripped with a loud tearing sound. Rhys let out a very loud, very exasperated shout, stomping his way down to the conference room he was supposed to be in.

"I'm sorry I'm... late," Rhys started to say hurriedly before he tapered off into a slow murmur as his eyes settled on the room. Or, rather, on *who* was in the room. There was a very empty seat beside Henderson that was definitely meant for him, Vasquez next to that one along with a few other people who worked in his department. On the other side of the long conference table was a bunch of people he'd never seen before but who looked *way* more important than anyone on his side of the table.

And then, at the head of the table in an overly large chair that was definitely brought in especially for the man sitting in it, was *Handsome fucking Jack*. Rhys felt his entire body break out into a cold sweat instantly as he realized this was absolutely a get-here-or-you'll-be-airlocked kind of important. He was going to pass out, he was absolutely going to pass out. Vasquez's sneer was nothing compared to the smug, outright *dangerous* smirk that *holy shit Handsome Jack* was giving him.

Forget passing out, Rhys was going to die.

He stood dumbly at the opposite end of the table of the CEO, unable to tear his gaze from the man. All those things he'd heard about him being imposing, commanding a room, downright terrifying to share an air space with? Yeah, didn't hold a fucking *candle* to the real thing. Rhys felt like there was an army of soldiers staring him down in that one gaze. It felt like the whole goddamn universe



existed in that moment just because Handsome Jack wanted it to. All that energy, all that *power* was directed at him and Rhys felt like he couldn't be any smaller.

"Glad you finally decided to join us, princess."

Handsome Jack's voice was like *butter*. Like poisoned butter that would kill you just from smelling it. Not that Rhys had never heard it, obviously he'd heard it come through the speakers throughout Helios and in recorded messages in Opportunity and, embarrassingly, from the figurines he had of the man. But, just like the man's presence, it was nothing like the real thing. If Rhys hadn't been so scared he might have popped a boner just from hearing it.

Wait, princess? He definitely knew someone else who called him princess... It was, again, like Handsome Jack was willing the universe to bend at his every whim just from the sheer presence of him living in it. Rhys watched as the man- no, practically the *god*- brought his hand up to run a hand through that perfectly styled hair, causing Rhys to finally divert his eyes from his face. That's when he caught it, the gear tattoo that only his drunk brain had managed to recognize and then completely forget about.

No way, no *fucking way*. How had he missed it? All the posters, all the memorabilia, how had Rhys completely missed that goddamn tattoo? Rhys knew everything there was to know about Handsome Jack- at least, what was publicly known. He was part of several online fan clubs for Christ's sake! But somehow it just slipped his mind that Handsome Jack had the same tattoo as Rhys had seen in *several dick pics* that he currently had saved to his phone?

No, definitely not, that wasn't possible. This was all just coincidence. He was just talking to someone on the internet who had a matching tattoo with Handsome Jack because he was just as big a fan as Rhys was. Yeah, that had to be it, there was no way *Handsome Jack would give him the time of day to text him on a sugar baby app and pay to see Rhys fuck himself on camera. Handsome Jack could watch anyone, could fuck anyone for free. There was no way it had been him all along. So why would his username be JackDaddy69?*

"Rhys," Henderson's hushed, violent hiss of his name snapped him out of his trance, his eyes snapping over to his boss. He was giving him a look that, at the very least, said, 'sit the fuck down,' and that was just about as much Rhys was going to read into that. Rhys swallowed thickly as he walked over to his seat on shaky legs, the heated gaze from the head of the table watching him certainly not going unnoticed- and while it was unnoticed, Rhys pointedly tried his damn hardest to ignore it.

*It went without saying that Rhys had no fucking clue what was going on during the entirety of the meeting because he simply couldn't focus. His mind was racing so fast he couldn't even keep up with himself, his heart moving twice that pace. Every once in a while he'd get enough courage to glance over at Jack, and every time the man was looking at him with this self-satisfied smirk that made Rhys' skin prickle with goosebumps. Rhys couldn't help but wonder if this was all a set-up, if he really had been talking to Handsome Jack all this time and this was the man's over-the-top, fuck-you way of saying, 'you wanted to know what I look like.' Rhys shivered at the very idea, and then reminded himself Handsome Jack wouldn't go to all this trouble just for some barely out-of-college middle-manager.*

*That didn't mean Rhys didn't absolutely love the idea that he just might.*

*The only reason Rhys knew the meeting was over was because everyone was standing, still completely deaf to everything around him. He numbly stood up from his seat, grunting as Vasquez elbowed him in the ribs. He didn't even have the energy in him to glare at his rival, too exhausted from the constant fear of dying he'd felt the whole meeting. He was just glad it was over and that he*

*could finally leave and run into the arms of his friends as the no doubt crying mess he was going to become because holy shit he'd never been this close to dying.*

*"Ah-ah, princess, not you. You gotta stay."*

*Handsome Jack's voice rang through his ears like someone was slamming a gong right up against his temple and now he was definitely sure he'd never been this close to dying. He was pretty sure in a few short minutes he was going to be as close to dying as a person could get, AKA dead. All he could think was, fuck you, Henderson! Why didn't you tell me Handsome fucking Jack was going to be at this meeting?!*

*"Y'know, I gotta say, it's pretty ballsy of you, showing up late to a meeting with the guy who owns your literal frickin' existence, cupcake," Jack said in a tone that was all-too cheery for Rhys' taste. Rhys glanced helplessly at the conference door as the last of the people in the room left. One kind woman from the opposite side of the table gave him a sympathetic glance over her shoulder at him. At least someone was going to acknowledge that he was about to die.*

*Rhys' attention was brought back to the CEO as the man snapped his fingers three times impatiently, demanding Rhys' full attention. The sound of the door finally sliding shut made Rhys jump like a scared rabbit who just found himself caught in a wolf's den. The analogy couldn't have been more fitting, what with the toothy, wolfish grin Jack had on his face where he leaned back to one side of his chair, elbow propped up on the arm rest. He was staring at Rhys like he was about to jump him and strangle the life out of his skinny neck.*

*"Well, isn't it?" Jack asked expectantly, and Rhys opened his mouth only to be cut off before he could speak. "Actually, don't answer that, I already know the answer. It's pretty freakin' ballsy. You know, you look familiar, do I know you from somewhere?" Jack grinned even wider because oh yeah, he was definitely going to play with his food first. He placed a hand on his chin thoughtfully, pursing his lips together and quirked an eyebrow like he was actually trying to figure out where he knew the kid from.*

*Suddenly, he snapped his fingers again like he'd figured it out and Rhys jolted at the sound. It was taking Jack everything in his power not to cackle at how red Rhys was. He couldn't break the facade, not yet, he needed to torture him more first. "I got it! Wait, no... No, that's not it. Hmm..." Jack cast his eyes up to the ceiling, rubbing at his chin as he hummed to himself.*

*While Jack was trying not to laugh Rhys was trying not to shake from head to toe. Just the fact that he was alone in the same room with Handsome Jack was enough to make him scared out of his mind. Then, on top of being late, Jack was toying with him. Rhys almost wanted to laugh at the irony of it all, at the fact that he was terrified that Handsome Jack had been watching him slut it up on camera for the past several weeks when in reality there was no way the man even knew Rhys existed.*

*"I just can't seem to remember," Jack's voice tore Rhys from his internal conflict, his hands flexing nervously at his sides. "Ah, oh well. But listen, can I ask you something?" The way Jack's voice dropped an octave, lowered to a threatening purr almost seemed to suggest something that Rhys' terrified mind didn't have enough wits to comprehend right now.*

*Instead, Rhys nodded dumbly, watching as the man, the myth, the legend finally arose from his seat. Even though Jack was just barely an inch taller than Rhys he seemed larger than life, and the closer he got with each deliberate step the more Rhys felt like he was absolutely towering over him. Maybe it was the sheer size of him, how he was broad in every way that Rhys was thin, arms thick with muscle, chest strong and imposing. Whatever it was, Rhys truly felt like an ant to a boot under that heterochromatic gaze.*

*Jack walked up to Rhys until the space between them was barely the width of a grape. Rhys didn't realized he'd been holding his breath until he took in a sharp breath, his eyelids fluttering as the scent of the man filled his senses. The smell was earthy, thick like smoke that swirled around Rhys' head. It wasn't like anything he'd ever smelled before and there wasn't anything he could even think to compare it to. There was, however, undoubtably an underlying hint of gunpowder that Rhys was sure was not a coincidence. That was probably fresh gunpowder he was smelling, ripe off the heated barrel of Jack's pistol he probably pointed at some sad sap's head before their meeting. Rhys was absolutely intoxicated.*

*Even though Rhys was pretty sure the hands that Jack was reaching up was going to wrap around his throat he couldn't bring himself to look anywhere but the man's face. He was completely enraptured in him, in the murderous gleam in his eyes and the way his mask moved perfectly with every twitch of his face almost like there wasn't a mask there at all. He was smirking again, lips parted just enough that Rhys could feel his breath warm across his face. Peppermint, Rhys thought in his stupor.*

*The hand that Rhys thought was going to strangle him instead gripped his ripped tie and Jack twisted his wrist so he could wrap the fabric around his knuckles before he gripped it again. He gave a sharp tug, causing Rhys to jerk forward with a grunt, nearly closing the grape-sized distance between them.*

*"You a Handsome Jack fan, cupcake?" Jack's smirk broke out into another devilish grin like he knew something. And maybe Rhys knew that something too, somewhere in the back of his mind. The coincidences that were surrounding them were stacking too high for Rhys to ignore it anymore.*

*"Who isn't?" Rhys answered with more confidence than he felt. He didn't think Jack's grin could get any wider but, man, was he wrong.*

*"Good answer."*

## Chapter End Notes

Ooh so much tension. Can you guess what happens next??

## Chapter 5

### Chapter Summary

Jack's got a problem with his new obsession and when Jack has problems he can't fix himself (which is rarely, by the way) he begrudgingly calls for help. As for Rhys? Yeah, he's so fucked.

### Chapter Notes

dang that's a lotta new tags.

Few things about this chapter:

- \*As far as Jack's internalized homophobia goes he doesn't use any slurs or really say anything nasty, he's really just mad at himself for wanting to fuck a dude.
- \*Jack's a lil rough with Rhys but that's to be expected yeah?
- \*Rhys is totally into the aforementioned roughness bc he's a kinky lil bitch
- \*Jack wears boots in my canon bc it's hot ok
- \*Jack's an asshole but we all knew this

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Jack was *straight*. He liked big tits and pussy, bottom line. So then why the hell was he talking to this string bean of a guy on the internet? Why the hell was he so turned on by this kid's pretty face and cute cock and *fucking hell that ass*? And don't even get him started on those tattoos. He wanted to trace every single one of them with his tongue, the bold blue lines against that pale skin really just *doing* it for him.

Jack was grinding his teeth, jaw clenched as he angrily glared down at the now plethora of pictures he had. He had them holo-projected from his watch, his elbow resting against his thigh under the desk as if he was trying to hide them from somebody even though he damn well knew nobody was in his office except him. He was probably more hiding from his own shame, because no matter how much he glared at the pictures he couldn't shake the arousal they filled him with.

That first night he'd gotten pictures from the kid he hadn't really been thinking about the fact that this was a *guy*, he just saw some pretty looking thing on some godforsaken website he'd signed up for to catch some young tail on the side. It wasn't until he was convincing him to do a live cam show that he realized '*Jesus Christ Jack you're straight why the hell do you want to see this kid in action so bad?*' Yeah, he was technically still dating Nisha, but they'd agreed that they were in more of an open relationship considering she lived down on Pandora and Jack was all the way up on Helios.

And then the kid finally *did* the live show and Jack wasn't sure he'd ever come that hard in his life, watching him get off on a life-size replica of his cock. So he watched him again, and again, angry at himself for paying money, real fucking money to watch a *guy* get off while Jack sat in his office or on his bed or his couch and jerked off like some sad creep. He could literally have sex with anyone- specifically any *woman*- whenever the hell he wanted. He wasn't *gay*, the closest he'd ever come to

doing anything remotely homosexual was that time Nisha fingered him while she sucked him off (which, admittedly, had been an all-around amazing experience because Nisha was goddamn sinful with her mouth and Jack had discovered just exactly what a prostate was good for).

Jack let out an angry growl and closed the pictures, sliding himself closer to his desk so he could reach the keyboard there. He pressed a button that booted up the holo-screen and went into his contact, pulling Nisha's up. Surely she'd know what to make of this. He leaned back in his throne as he watched the little spinning circle in the middle of the screen as he waited for the video call to make a connection. After way too many minutes Nisha picked up, and Jack quirked an eyebrow at her disheveled appearance. Her hair was mussed like she'd been sleeping, her cowboy hat surprisingly not on her head. She was only wearing a bra and she was definitely in bed. Jack glanced at the time, inwardly wincing when he realized just how late it was.

"What the hell do you want, lover boy?" Despite the pet name she, obviously, sounded pissed. Probably had to do with the fact that it was practically one in the morning.

"In my defense it's pretty hard to tell the difference between night and day without the whole sun setting and rising thing," Jack said with a shrug before he continued, fully expecting to have his conversation anyway. "So, listen pumpkin, I've got a problem. And before you say anything it's not the 'just shoot them out of an airlock' kind of problem. I mean, it could be if I really wanted it to, but even *I* can't justify that course of action, but that's probably just my hate-boner talking. Anyway, so there's this guy—"

"Can you at least give me a fucking second to wake up before you start going off you inconsiderate asshole?" Nisha was clearly having none of his shit, cutting him off with an angry glare. There was some shuffling on the other end as she moved herself into a sitting position, propping herself up against her (very tacky) headboard (Jack had picked it out, of course it was tacky). It was clear she was taking her time getting situated, rubbing her eyes and turning a light on beside the large bed she was thankfully sharing with only herself.

"Alright," she drawled with a yawn, running a hand through her hair to straighten it out some, "so Handsome Jack has a problem he can't solve by killing someone and, surprise, he doesn't know how to handle it. What kind of problem are we talking about?"

"The boner kind, didn't you hear me mention my hate-boner?" Jack looked annoyed that she'd even asked as he crossed his arms across his chest.

"Uhh... So fuck her?"

"Well, she's a guy, so..."

The silence that drifted between them was way too long but, honestly, neither of them knew what to say. Jack was uncomfortable admitting out loud that he wanted to fuck a guy and Nisha was equally uncomfortable with actually not having something to say to that.

"Alright, you're gonna have to explain this from the beginning."

And Jack did. He told her about the website and why he'd initially gotten an account, and about how he'd ended up messaging a guy on a whim that he didn't really think was going to go anywhere. He told her about the pictures, *fuck* those fucking pictures, and then the cam shows and all the Handsome Jack shit the kid owned. At first Nisha suggested it all stemmed from that, Jack's big ass ego more wrapped up in the fact that the kid clearly worshipped him than his gender and Jack made it very clear that he resented the very notion. By the end of it, Nisha was scowling at him in a way that made Jack feel like she wasn't going to give him a solution.

“It’s not my job to talk you through your internalized homophobia, Jack. I’m not your fucking therapist,” she snapped harshly, but Jack just brushed it off and blamed it on her being cranky.

“Nisha, baby, listen to me. I’m not gay, alright? You know this, pfft, clearly I’ve shown you that,” Jack gave her a cheeky grin and a wink, “but I’m definitely pretty sure my dick is broken.”

Nisha rolled her eyes, realizing that the only way she was going to get any sleep tonight was if she actually solved this problem for him. “Then I stand by my first statement: fuck him.” She laughed at the way Jack sputtered at the suggestion and Jack snarled back at her laughing face. “Maybe you need to get it out of your system,” she said with a shrug, “it’s not gonna kill you to try it. And, hey, maybe you won’t even be able to get it up once you get to it. Handsome Jack’s fragile masculinity *restored*.”

Jack didn’t quite like her tone there but maybe she was right. Not about the fragile masculinity, because Handsome Jack’s masculinity was anything but fragile, he was the man every man wished they could be for fuck’s sake. But the getting it out of his system part, yeah, he could get down with that. It was no more than an itch he needed to scratch and she was probably he right, he probably couldn’t get it up when the situation arose.

Suddenly, Jack’s face split into a grin, fingers drumming on his desk excitedly. “Nisha, princess, cupcake, *babydoll*. See, I knew I called you for a reason.” He shot her some finger guns and ended the call without bothering to say goodbye.

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It didn’t take much for Jack to do an image search in the employee database to find out that his little sugar baby was Rhys Strongfork. He worked in data-mining under that creepy fuck Saul Henderson and was only a few years out of college (Jack had ignored the way his blood ran hot thinking about how young the kid was). He’d set up a last-minute meeting with a few random people from his team and a couple other random execs that had to do with data-mining with no intention of actually paying attention to any of it.

And that was how he ended up here, the scrawny little punk’s hideous skinny tie wrapped around his fist with barely a few inches to spare between them.

“Have you figured it out yet, pumpkin?” Jack was practically purring, definitely getting off on the fear that was etched across those mismatched eyes. All he received was a dumb nod from the kid, *Rhys*, and Jack cackled at that. The sound made Rhys jump like a scared animal and Jack couldn’t help but stare at the pink tongue that peeked out to lick soft-looking lips.

Jack gave a downward jerk of Rhys’ tie, and if Rhys were a better man he might not have sunk down to his knees immediately at the motion, but alas, Rhys was indeed not a better man. Judging by the grunt above him, Jack was pleased with the instant obedience. Rhys looked up at the CEO from beneath his eyelashes with a faux innocence and Jack was completely *wrecked* by it.

“Go ahead, kitten, get to work.”

The fear Rhys felt before suddenly flushed itself out of his system, the permission to touch lighting a fire within him. Maybe it was that slutty side of him that was giving him confidence, but he wasted no time bringing his hands up to pull at Jack’s belt and get his pants open. There was, however, a brief moment where he hesitated once he was met with the black fabric of Jack’s underwear, his heart hammering in his chest at the idea that he was about to *suck Handsome Jack’s cock*, that beautiful cock from the pictures that he hadn’t realized was Handsome Jack’s until he’d walked into the conference room.

Rhys swallowed when he realized he was literally salivating at the thought before he tugged at both Jack's pants and underwear until they were down just enough for the mostly-soft cock to slide out. Rhys glanced up when Jack started laughing, confused at first only to blush when he realized he must have made an embarrassing noise at the sight. He gave Jack the most pouty glare the man had ever seen before his attention was back to the cock in front of him. He gripped the base with his flesh hand and wrapped his mouth around the rest of it, which wasn't much of a feat since it was still soft.

Rhys ran his tongue along the underside of the warm cock in his mouth, his cybernetic hand resting against Jack's clothed thigh. Somewhere in the back of his mind Rhys wondered if he should be charging for this like he did his cam shows, but that made him feel too much like a prostitute and he pushed the thought into the back of his mind. Instead, he hummed around Jack's cock, pleased as the man gave an appreciative one back.

Rhys felt proud of himself as he felt Jack hardening in his mouth, lips and tongue working him to full hardness. It wasn't long before Rhys' lips were stretched around him, head bobbing back and forth as he greedily sucked on the dick of his dreams. The hand that had been wrapped around the base of Jack's cock moved to cup his balls and a shiver of pleasure rippled up Rhys' spine as the man hissed above him, a strong hand fisting into his hair.

That confidence surged through him stronger, like a rush of adrenaline, his own cock twitching in the confines of his dress pants. Jack was starting to buck against his mouth, but Rhys had sucked enough cocks in his life to know just when to pull his head back or push back on the man's hips to keep him from choking him while also teasing.

When Rhys stopped moving his head Jack tightened his grip in his hair, the pain sending a wave of pleasure straight to his cock. He wasn't phased by the clear disapproval, however, knowing Jack was going to love what he had up his sleeve. Rhys flared his nostrils and took a deep breath through his nose before he looked up at Jack through his eyelashes again, blue and green eyes meeting his before Rhys relaxed his throat and took him to the hilt. For good measure, Rhys nuzzled his nose into the curls he was met with, and he was pretty sure he almost came in his pants at the completely feral, guttural noise Jack made above him. Rhys dragged his tongue up the underside of the cock in his mouth, moaned as fingernails dug into his scalp, and gave Jack's balls a soft squeeze.

This was the moment that Rhys fully succumbed to the fact that he was definitely a slut. How else could he deep throat like that?

"*Fuck*, kitten," Jack growled as he nudged his hips forward and pushed on the back of Rhys' head, his head tipping back at the way Rhys reflexively swallowed around him. So much for not getting it up. He let go of Rhys' tie in favor of cupping the front of his throat, not applying any pressure but just resting it there. With clenched teeth Jack looked back down at Rhys, who was looking up at him like Jack wasn't throat-deep right now. It wasn't until now that Jack realized he was panting, his feet shuffling on the floor so he could part his legs a little more. "You like having daddy's cock in your mouth?"

Wow, that did it for Rhys more than it should have. He moaned, long and loud around the cock in his mouth, eyes fluttering shut as he gave a bob of his head partly to catch his breath and partly as a silent 'yes'. Jack was chuckling above him, the tight hand in his hair loosening for a moment to pet him appreciatively and Rhys reveled in the praise. Suddenly, Rhys was pulling off Jack's cock with a startled moan as he felt the tip of Jack's boot grind against the bulge in his pants. Rhys looked up at Jack with wide eyes and flushed cheeks, lips spit-slick and parted as he panted for air. He rolled his hips forward to get more friction, moaning as Jack rewarded him with a firmer touch.

"You want daddy to fuck your mouth?" Jack's grin was wicked, eyes half-lidded with lust and

something *dark*. He gave an asking tug to Rhys' hair to which got the kid to nod, eagerly diving forward only to have Jack tug him back harshly by his hair. The whine that escaped Rhys' lips had Jack shivering. "Words, kitten."

"Yes, daddy," spilled from Rhys' lips much too quickly for his liking, a shuddering breath escaping him. His back arched with a moan as Jack ground his boot against his crotch again, his cybernetic hand curling to grip at the fabric of Jack's jeans. "*Please*," he whispered so quietly he wondered if he'd just thought it instead of saying it, but the look in Jack's eyes told him he'd definitely said it out loud.

Jack was pretty sure this kid was going to be the death of him, that wanton look in his eyes setting a flame in him he hadn't felt in years. He eased up on the grip in Rhys' hair and let the kid inch forward until his lips were at the head of his cock, open and waiting, tongue hanging from his lips obscenely. Jack groaned as he thrust his cock into that eager mouth, waisting no time in setting a brutal pace. Where his hand was pressed against Rhys' throat he could feel his cock sliding in and out, all the while Rhys' throat remaining open and pliant. Jack was letting out a steady stream of noises, with the occasional curse mixed in.

Rhys was providing his own moans, tears welling up at the corner of his eyes as he felt the back of his throat start to chafe. But he loved it, *fuck* he loved it, being used and roughed up. He was steadily grinding his hips into the boot pressed against his crotch and drool was starting to trickle down at the corner of his mouth. When Jack suddenly pulled him back by his hair he gasped for air, squeezing his eyes shut as he expected the warm spurts of cum to hit his face. When they never came he peeked an eye open, then the other as he saw Jack was squeezing the base of his cock with the hand that had been around his throat like a vice. Before Rhys could even ask the boot at his crotch came up to his chest, pushing him away so he rocked back and fell onto his ass.

"Get up and bend over," Jack spat at him, finally relinquishing the hold on his dick as the urge to come subsided. Rhys scurried to his feet as fast as he could, working his pants open without even having to be asked to and Jack really fucking liked that kind of initiative. Rhys let his pants and underwear pool around his ankles as he bent forward over the conference table, resting his elbows against the surface.

Jack ogled the pale, round flesh before him, finding that the skin there was far too unblemished. He moved himself behind Rhys before he brought his hand back only to bring it back down with a hard '*smack*,' relishing in the surprised shriek that left Rhys' lips. His fingers dug in over the reddening hand print, squeezing firmly at the meat there. Rhys' cock gave a twitch at the pleased-pain, legs involuntarily parting in anticipation.

"You know, you should be thanking me, pumpkin," Jack murmured from behind Rhys, the cool metal of the ring on Jack's index finger soothing the burn of the slap. Rhys couldn't help but curve his hips up into the touch and Jack snickered at the motion. "I mean, come on, how many people are lucky enough to say they choked on Handsome Jack's cock, hmm? Go ahead, I'm waiting."

Rhys glanced back at Jack over his shoulder incredulously. Did he... Really expect Rhys to thank him for that? The look on his face said yes. Which, yeah, okay, kind of fair. Rhys did feel incredibly lucky to have the ultimate wet dream come true and Jack obviously knew it, cocky bastard. It seemed Rhys was taking a little too long to show his gratitude, however, Jack's face twisting into a snarl as he lunged forward and grabbed a fistful of Rhys' hair, yanking his head back so his back arched impossible.

Rhys whined at the forcefulness, cock straining where it hang below the table. Jack curled his body over the lithe form, and he couldn't stop the groan that escaped him as his cock slipped between



those soft cheeks, couldn't stop the way his hips ground forward for more of the friction. The sound Rhys made in return was just as desperate, a shiver running down his spine as Jack's lips brushed his ear.

"I can't seem to hear you, *kitten*," Jack hissed out the last word as his fingers curled tighter in Rhys' hair and the younger man answered with a pathetic whine, his eyes fluttering closed in embarrassment of just how much he loved the harsh touches. "*Say thank you, daddy.*" It was a whisper, hot against the shell of his ear, and if Rhys couldn't feel the incredible hard-on pressing instantly against his ass he might have thought Jack was actually angry by the tone of his voice.

"Th-Thank you, daddy," Rhys murmured, voice trembling as Jack bit at the juncture of his jaw. Rhys could have come right there, Handsome Jack plastered against his back and biting him, ordering him around like a whore. And he would have, too, if he didn't want this to last so badly.

Jack practically purred in his ear, the rolling hum vibrating through his chest and along Rhys' back where they touched. "Good boy," he murmured, each pull of his lips dragging against Rhys' skin. He couldn't stop the grin that split across his face as the younger man mewled beneath him at the praise, Jack giving a fleeting lick to his ear before all that delicious warmth against Rhys' back was gone.

When Jack relinquished his hold on the younger man's hair Rhys' head fell forward unceremoniously. He just barely caught himself before his face smacked against the table, his warm breath blowing condensation across the glass surface. He blushed as he saw his cock through the transparent table for the first time, jutting from his spread legs and glistening with precum. He felt dirty and vulnerable and that wasn't even the worst part. The worst part was that he loved it, Yvette's words about him being a slut echoing through his mind tauntingly.

Rhys was snapped from his thoughts when another crack of Jack's hand landed across his ass, his body jolting forward so hard the legs of the table screeched against the floor as he forced it forward barely a few centimeters. Then he felt the pad of a calloused thumb against his entrance and Rhys was already ready to start begging. He shivered as Jack's free hand reached up under his dress shirt, fingers dancing across his spine as the fabric was hiked up around his shoulders.

"You're a little slut, aren't you," Jack grumbled, admiring the milky expanse of Rhys' back. Rhys tried not to think too much about how much he liked Handsome Jack calling him a slut. "So eager to please, so ready to take anything I throw at you. That's the kind of team spirit I can get behind." Jack reached forward to press three fingers against Rhys' lips as if to test the aforementioned eagerness, pleased when those throat-fucked swollen lips parted and started licking and sucking like his damn life depended on it (not that it was that far of a stretch to think that his life *did* actually depend on it, this was Handsome Jack after all).

Rhys was moaning around the fingers in his mouth like he was sucking on candy, getting them nice and wet for what was to come. Jack raked his fingernails down the long stretch of skin in front of him, goosebumps prickling along Rhys' spine in their wake. The intrusive fingers were pulled away with a theatrical '*pop*,' and Rhys was pretty sure he saw stars as a finger was pushed into him without hesitation.

Unsurprisingly, Jack was not gentle as he opened Rhys. His fingers were quick in the wake of his own want, twisting and thrusting with a clumsiness that Rhys might have thought meant he'd never done this before had it not been Handsome Jack. The stretch was a little uncomfortable from the lack of finesse but Rhys didn't mind, too caught up in the reality of who was doing it to him to care. It wasn't until Jack had three fingers in to the last knuckle that his fingers brushed against Rhys' prostate in a way that felt like an accident but had Rhys shouting and shoving himself back on the

fingers regardless.

Jack paused, glancing up at the back of Rhys' head in bemusement. He allowed himself to enjoy the way Rhys whined at the loss of movement and wiggled his hips for more before he experimentally curled his fingers against the spot again, more deliberate this time. His eyes snapped to where Rhys' thighs quaked with the pleasure, Jack's cock jumping at the sounds he was making.

"That the spot, pumpkin?" Jack asked as he pressed again, and the heat that travelled up Jack's spine as Rhys murmured, "*Yes, yes, yes,*" had him pulling his fingers out and spitting into his hand. He ignored the whine of protest Rhys emitted, stroking his cock a few times before he spit in his hand again to get his cock wet. *Just getting it out of my system*, Jack thought as he lined his cock up with Rhys' quivering hole, easing the head in with a hiss as his head tipped back in pleasure. "*Fuck, you're tight, Rhysie.*"

Rhys moaned both from the feeling of being stretched and at the first use of his actual name- or, as close to his actual name as Jack had gotten all afternoon. He tried to push his hips back because Jack was just moving *too fucking slow*, but both of Jack's hands came to clamp down on his hips to hold him still. Once Jack got the head and then some in he pulled back before thrusting a little deeper, teeth bared where they were clenched tight, harsh breaths puffing through his nostrils.

A few, what felt like very long, minutes later and Jack was balls-deep in Rhys but was still unmoving. Rhys was kind of sick of it. He tried grinding his hips back against Jack, which earned him a pleased moan but still no movement. He tried clenching down tighter, which earned him blunt fingernails digging into his hips *but still no movement*. Rhys growled impatiently, and maybe it was the endorphins or the adrenaline but somehow Rhys mustered up the courage to look back at Jack with an angry glare, his lips pulled into a tight line.

"Are you going to fuck me or are you just going to stand there?"

Rhys realized his mistake instantly, the glare on his face fading into a wide-eyed gawk. Jack's gaze had turned animalistic, a fire in his eyes Rhys imagined was similar to the look Jack gave those who fell victim to an airlock or a gun barrel. Rhys swallowed nervously, and Jack's face split into a murderous grin because damn did he ever get off on that doe-eyed look of *fear*.

"Oh, *I'm* sorry, did somebody forget their place?" Jack sneered, and Rhys flinched as a hand reached forward, expecting it around his neck but instead, like earlier, the hand gripped his tie, only this time it *yanked*. Rhys coughed as he was choked, tears welling up in his eyes instantly as the thin material bit into his flesh. It wasn't enough to completely cut off his airflow but Rhys could definitely feel his face getting hot from the pressure. Still, Rhys got what he wanted.

Jack picked up a bruising pace, the sound of their skin slapping together echoing through the conference room. Rhys' back was arched with the strain of being pulled back by his tie, and although Jack had let up just enough that he was sure Rhys wouldn't pass out it was still keeping him pinned. Rhys was moaning on every thrust, broken sobs and whimpers escaping him as his hands scrambled for purchase on the slippery glass table below him. His cybernetic arm was noisy against the surface and, quite frankly, he was nervous he might break it by accident so he instead moved the hand back to grab at one of his own ass cheeks, squeezing the flesh and pulling at it slightly.

Oh boy, did Jack like that. He growled appreciatively at the sight, getting a better view of where his cock was sliding in and out of Rhys' tight hole. Jack shifted his hips a little so he could slide deeper, trying to find that spot from earlier with success if Rhys' scream of, "*Daddy!*" was anything to go by. "Yeah, that's right, scream for me, baby," Jack murmured, voice deep and thick like honey. The hand that was at Rhys' hip went to the wrist of Rhys' cybernetic hand, not sure if Rhys could feel the firm squeeze he gave. Rhys had been gripping his ass so tightly he almost looked like he was going

to bleed and it was actually making Jack nervous. He gave a tighter squeeze and pulled a little at the cybernetics, and Rhys must have felt that because he let up on the tight hold.

Jack returned his hand to Rhys' hip, starting to pull the lithe form back to meet each of his thrusts. "You fuckin' like that? You gonna come for daddy?" Jack wasn't really looking for an answer, more talking for himself because, as everybody knew, Jack liked the sound of his own voice. Rhys liked it too, moaning at the filthy words coming from the man behind him, encouraging him to keep going.

"When I saw you, fucking yourself on *my* dick— Yeah, I bet you didn't think I'd notice, did you? All those posters of me, the way you shouted *my— fucking— name—*," he punctuated each of the last three words with a hard thrust, "as you came all over yourself. You didn't even know I was watching, did you? Had no idea that your sick little fantasies would be coming true." Jack gave a pull at the tie before he let go of it, instead reaching to the back of Rhys' neck and shoving his face down against the table.

Rhys loved it, loved every second of it. The glass was cool against his hot face, Jack's fingers curling into the hairs at the nape of his neck. It was almost gentle, actually, the most gentle gesture Jack had shown him this whole time (not that that was saying much). His mouth was open in a constant stream of panting and whining, his entire body practically shaking as Jack's cock pounded into his prostate with nearly every thrust. And Jack was still fucking talking, never stopped, and Rhys was melting at the harsh, dark, gruff tones of his voice.

"— bet you've got a fucking fan club for me, don't you? You fucking *worship me*." Jack was getting close, from the pleasure of it all, the tight warmth around his cock, the way Rhys was pliable under him, the way his ego was swelling from his own damn words. His eyes lit up as he watched Rhys nod to that last statement, his god complex inflating impossibly.

Jack leaned forward so he was more hunched over Rhys, the hand on the back of the younger man's neck moving to the back of his head, supporting some of his weight where he was crushing Rhys into the table. He craned his neck down to lick a hot stripe up Rhys' back, right between his shoulder blades, leaving a sharp bite in his wake. The hand at Rhys' hip snaked down to wrap his hand around the straining cock there, making Rhys let out a startled moan as his hips struggled with the conflict of bucking towards the hand on his cock or the cock in his ass.

Rhys was practically deaf to everything around him, the blood rushing in his ears far louder than anything else in the room. There was a considerable amount of drool on the table now, and he was constantly chanting, "*Yes, daddy, please. Please, please, daddy, please!*" He wasn't even sure what he was begging for, eyes screwed shut as he felt his orgasm building, coiling in his gut.

And then Jack was all over him again, plastered against his back as his lips tickled at his ear. "*Come for daddy*," Jack whispered, and Rhys could hear the smirk on his lips, could feel it against his skin. He suddenly realized what he'd been begging for, and he was too overcome by the pleasure of his orgasm to feel embarrassed that he'd been begging for permission.

Rhys came with a strangled shout, his hips snapping back against Jack's as the older man stroked him through his orgasm. Rhys was trembling, his breathing quick and almost frantic as the most amazing orgasm of his life ripped through his body without remorse. Jack was moaning at how tight Rhys had gotten, his thrusts losing their rhythm as his own release neared.

Rhys was trying to blink away the white spots from his vision, his body still warm and vibrating with the afterglow of his orgasm. He could tell Jack was close, wanted to tell him to come inside of him like the dirty slut he was but he couldn't find the words, only soft whimpers and whines coming from his lips as he was continually fucked into even as his body was starting to grow over-sensitive.

Jack barely registered the loud whine that Rhys let out as he pulled out of him suddenly and let go of his spent cock. He grabbed his own cock and came with a thundering groan after a few quick strokes, painting that pink and milky ass with his cum. He had to bring the hand that had been at the back of Rhys' head to grab his ass in order to steady himself, his knees almost buckling under him at the shocks of pleasure coursing through him. His eyes raked over the streaks of cum that had shot up as far as Rhys' mid-back, pupils blown wide at the prospect that he'd marked what was his. His deep, panting breaths were loud in his own ears as the aftershocks hummed through him.

They were both quiet for a long time, trying to catch their breath and unable to address the situation. Rhys glanced down at where his cum was splattered along the underside of the table, vaguely wondering if Jack was going to make him clean up the mess. When Jack took a step back Rhys hissed at the realization the backs of his thighs were chafed from where Jack's belt and zipper had ruthlessly rubbed the skin raw. He felt Jack undoubtedly wipe cum onto a clean part of Rhys' ass and Rhys had to fight the groan of annoyance because this wasn't just some random guy he could tell off.

Rhys waited patiently still bent over for Jack to clean up the mess he'd made. Instead, Jack was zipping up his jeans and buckling his belt, smoothing out the front of his clothes. He glanced at the cum-covered ass in front of him in search of a clean spot to spank and Rhys cursed when Jack went too low and slapped the sensitive skin where ass met thigh.

"That was fun, princess," Jack quipped with a casualness that Rhys couldn't even fathom in their current situation, "don't worry about the mess, I'll send a bot in to clean up." And with that, Jack walked away from Rhys like they hadn't just fucked for the past forty-five minutes. Rhys stared incredulously at Jack's back as he walked towards the door, wondering how in the fuck he was going to clean himself up and how pissed Henderson was going to be that he'd been gone for so long.

Jack stopped at the doorway and turned to Rhys, and the younger man shivered at how threatened he felt just from a single look. "Oh, and if you tell *anybody* about this, my hands will be wrapped around that pretty little neck of yours before you can say, '*daddy, no.*'"

And he was gone.

## Chapter End Notes

did you guys like my state farm joke?? you guys totally liked my state farm joke.

## Chapter 6

### Chapter Summary

Rhys has an unexpected visit with his boss and Jack has yet another dilemma.

### Chapter Notes

Thank you guys for all your amazing comments! I look forward to reading them every time I post a new chapter, I really appreciate it!

This chapter is a little shorter since it's just a set-up. I do have an idea for a new fic that I want to start soooooo bad though but I want to finish this one before I start another so I don't get too caught up in one and forget about the other.

It took Rhys another ten minutes to clean himself up because he couldn't exactly see any of the cum on his back. He had angrily thrown his ripped, and now soiled, skinny tie in the garbage and pulled his pants up, glaring at where his cum was smeared all over the glass conference room table. He left the mess just like Jack said, storming back to his cubicle.

Don't get him wrong, Rhys was happy. Fucking *ecstatic*. He'd just gotten the best lay of his life from the literal man of his dreams. He actually wasn't even sure that it wasn't all just a very long wet dream that he was going to wake up from. But he was also pissed. Pissed that Jack had left him to struggle with cleaning himself up, pissed that his favorite tie was ruined, pissed that Henderson was no doubt going to chew him out for being gone for the last hour and it wasn't because Handsome Jack had killed him (because there was no other excuse that could warrant such an absence).

And, on top of it all, Rhys couldn't tell anybody about the best fuck of his life lest he wanted to be strangled to death.

Rhys plopped down into his chair with an angry huff, ignoring the odd glances he was getting from the cubicles surrounding his. He was probably a sight to see, his normally perfectly styled hair in shambles, tie missing, clothes rumpled in odd places. He wouldn't be surprised if everyone knew he'd just had sex, he fucking looked like it. But Rhys could hardly find it in him to care after everything he'd been through that day. He just hoped Henderson didn't want a report on the meeting because he had no idea what it had even been about much less the contents of it.

Rhys powered up his computer and shifted in his chair, wincing at the pain that shot up his spine from both the brutal fucking and the sore skin where he'd been spanked during said brutal fucking. He tried to scrub away the blush on his cheeks with his flesh hand, willing away his half-hard erection at the memories, the things Jack had said to him. He shivered.

"Nice of you to finally show up, Rhys," he shivered again, this time at the smarmy voice that had suddenly appeared behind him. Great, just what he needed, another asshole to deal with. He didn't bother to turn around, sure that Vasquez was leaning against the wall of his cubicle the way he always did when he was being smug with Rhys.

“What do you want, *Hugo*?” Rhys spat, pulling up his emails once he’d logged into his computer.

“Henderson’s pre-tty pissed that you’re not dead right now,” yeah, tell him something he didn’t know, “between showing up late to a meeting with *Handsome Jack* and then disappearing for an hour? Looking like *that*?” Hugo whistled condescendingly, and that made Rhys whip around with an angry glare. Hugo held his hands up defensively, eyebrows raised. “Hey, don’t give *me* that look. I’m just trying to... Give you a heads up.”

It was just like Hugo to act like he was doing Rhys a goddamn favor by rubbing it in his face that his entire day was fucked. Rhys’ glare didn’t relent, even as Vasquez’s eyes seemed to flick to something on his neck. Oh shit, was there cum there? Rhys reflexively reached up to feel for any, flinching when a slight tingle of pain prickled at his skin. He’d forgotten Jack had bitten him.

“Listen, Hugo, I *really* appreciate it, I really do, but if you could just—“ Rhys was cut off as Hugo took a step closer to him, grabbing at the side of his shirt. Rhys slapped his hand away with his cybernetic hand to really make it hurt. “Don’t touch me, jack-off.”

“Looks like you’re the jack-off, *Rhys*,” Hugo said with a growing smirk, eyes lingering at Rhys’ side. And what the hell did that mean? Rhys looked down to where Hugo was staring, his face going pale once he saw it. There might not have been cum on his neck but there was definitely a huge cum stain on his shirt near the waistband of his pants. All Rhys could think was, *Fuck you, Handsome Jack, and your horrible bedside manners.*

“I’d lend you a spare shirt but I don’t think it’d fit,” Hugo teased, as if he’d ever actually help Rhys out even if he could. “You know, I didn’t really think a beanpole like yourself got much action, but maybe I was wrong,” Hugo shrugged, “but to have the *balls* to do it at work? Now that, I was pretty sure you didn’t have in you.” Hugo was grinning like he’d just won the damn lottery.

That was it, Rhys had had it, he couldn’t take it anymore. He opened his mouth to start a tirade, a well-deserved tirade that Vasquez had coming to him for years now. The promotion he’d been gunning for was pretty much dead in the water now, what else did he have to lose? Unfortunately, before he could get more than a breath out Henderson was calling him from the door of his office, voice tight and unforgiving.

Hugo only grinned wider, eyes alight with the satisfaction of knowing that Rhys was toast. “Good luck, *Rhys*.”

Rhys’ hands were shaking as he stood up, but not out of fear. No, Rhys was pretty sure fear was no longer a factor in his life now that he’d stared Handsome Jack in the eyes and let him rail him into next week. He was shaking out of anger, glaring at Hugo as he brushed past him with a rough bump of shoulders.

When he stepped into Henderson’s office the man was looking out the large window spanning the back wall, his back to Rhys. It was all very ominous, like some Pandoran mafia movie he’d seen on ECHOflix. Henderson wasn’t a very intimidating guy, he was significantly shorter than Rhys and pretty scrawny, a weaselly kind of man. However, when your team got called into a meeting with Handsome Jack anyone could become scary at how much Rhys had fucked up. Or, rather, how much everyone *thought* Rhys had fucked up. He was pretty sure he was in the clear, considering he was alive and Handsome Jack had just finished using him up.

Which, come to think of it now, all that soreness he was waiting to feel had finally settled in. His neck hurt like a bitch from where it had twisted from Jack pressing his face into the conference table. His jaw was aching as he rolled it a few times to get the kinks out, rubbing at it with his flesh hand. He could feel his belt digging into the bruises on his hips from where Jack had been holding onto him

and even his back was kind of sore from arching off the table when Jack was choking him with his own tie or pulling his hair. Oh yeah, that reminded him, his scalp felt like it had been brushed with a spiked hairbrush from all the pulling.

“Mr. Henderson, sir,” Rhys greeted, clasping his hands together behind his back as he waited for some kind of instruction. He was waiting by the door, not bothering to approach the desk or sit down if he was just going to have to turn around and collect his things when he was fired.

“Rhys,” Henderson’s voice was softer than it had been when he’d called him into his office, almost pleased. Rhys quirked an eyebrow at that, though he relaxed it instantly when his boss finally turned around to face him. Henderson approached his desk and gestured at the two seats on the opposite side. “Please, sit.”

Rhys hesitated a moment before he took a tentative step forward, continuing when Henderson gave a pleased smile. Was this the calm before the storm? Rhys sat down at one of the chairs, though he would have much rather preferred to stand with how sore his ass was. But now was not the time to think about that.

If Henderson noticed the bite on Rhys’ neck or the cum on his shirt he didn’t comment, taking a seat in his own chair. He cleared his throat, pulling up an email on his computer. “Do you know who this email is from?” He spun the holo-screen around so Rhys could see the document, eyes scanning over the sender.

“Um, that’s from Handsome Jack’s secretary, sir,” Rhys said quizzically, wondering why he was being asked such a strange question. Meg pretty much handled anything menial that Handsome Jack didn’t want to deal with himself. “May I ask why you’re showing me this?”

Henderson gestured to the email, “why don’t you read it for yourself?”

Okay, this was weird. Rhys’ eyes slowly moved back to the email, reading over its contents.

*Good Afternoon Mr. Henderson,*

*I am pleased to notify you that Handsome Jack would like to pass along an employee evaluation of Mr. Rhys Strongfork. He was pleased with his performance today at your [information redacted] meeting and appreciated the initiative he took to stay behind afterwards and discuss strategy to continue with the [information redacted] Project.*

*His comments are as follows:*

*“five frickin’ gold stars”*

*Sincerely,  
Meg*

Rhys gaped at the message, unsure what to think or feel. It had taken a lot of will power not to snort at Jack’s *actual* words, because all that shit about his ‘performance’ and ‘initiative’ was definitely just Meg trying to make everything a little more professional. He was thankful for it, though, because it made him seem like he’d really done something that made the whole team look good.

It was unnerving knowing that that ‘something’ was sucking CEO dick.

Rhys knew Henderson knew that it didn’t make sense. Rhys had shown up late, didn’t talk the whole time, and Jack had made him stay, Rhys didn’t volunteer himself. But he knew that his boss was ignoring those facts in favor of taking the praise from Handsome Jack.

Rhys slid his gaze back to Henderson, who was practically beaming at him now. He just hoped to all that was holy that Henderson didn't ask him what they had 'discussed.' Rhys gave a sheepish smile back, clearing his throat at the awkwardness in the room. No doubt he was the only one feeling awkward considering he was the only one who knew what had *actually* happened in that conference room, but that fact didn't really do much to quell his nerves.

"Rhys, I'm impressed," Henderson said as he turned the screen back to himself, closing the email out. "You've really outdone yourself. Getting a compliment from Handsome Jack? That's really something."

Rhys laughed nervously, scratching the back of his neck. "Ah, yeah, thanks. I, um... Thank you?"

"No, thank you! I was so worried, I thought Handsome Jack was surely going to... Well, not to be *harsh*, but I thought he was going to send you out of an airlock after you showed up late to that meeting. He was very angry when we walked in without you, asked for you by name even. He must have had some specific plans for you! If you don't mind me asking... What exactly did you discuss?"

Shit. Shit shit shit. What the hell was he going to say? *'Oh, you know, we discussed how much of a slut I am while Handsome Jack gave me the best orgasm of my life!'* Even if he wanted to say some ridiculous shit like that he couldn't, his fear of those big, strong hands wrapping around his throat in a non-sexual way reminding Rhys that he couldn't say a goddamn word.

"Um... Not to be rude, sir, but, ah— H-Handsome Jack specifically asked for my discretion," it shouldn't have been so hard to come up with the lie because, well, it wasn't even a lie. He'd explicitly been told to not utter a word about their... Encounter, and it wasn't completely unbelievable that Handsome Jack would have secret things to talk about. Why he would talk about them with Rhys? He had no explanation for that, but he hoped Henderson was smart enough to just leave it at that.

"Oh! Of course! I completely understand, Rhys, no need to fret. Handsome Jack is a powerful man, he makes the rules, not me."

Rhys breathed a sigh of relief, nodding his head in acknowledgement. Okay, the day was turning around. Rhys was no longer fearing for his job, he *still* hadn't woken up from what was most definitely a very long, very sexy dream, and he couldn't wait to tell Hugo to shove it.

"Why don't you take the rest of the day off? You deserve it," Henderson said with a smile.

Rhys' eyes nearly bulged out of his head, not believing his ears. He blinked his ECHOeye on to check the time, barely even 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Half days were practically unheard of on Helios, and here his boss was handing one to him. The idea of a shower and a nap was tantalizing.

"Oh, sir, thank you, but that isn't necessary," Rhys hated saying it, but he knew the right thing to do was deny the offer at first. Nothing showed initiative like working until you couldn't anymore!

"No need to be modest, Rhys. Please, take the offer. Of all the years I've worked on Helios I've never received an email like that before."

After a few more 'are you sure's' and continuous confirmation from his boss, Rhys accepted the half-day. They shook hands and Rhys left, returning to his desk only to shut his computer off. He could feel Vasquez leering at him from across the room, probably because he thought Rhys was leaving because he'd gotten fired. Rhys glanced over his shoulder to make eye contact with him, giving a sly smirk before he turned his attention to the receptionist. He made his way over to her



desk, her pretty green eyes widening at the sight of him- probably because of the clothes, or the hickey.

“Hey, Julia, would you mind forwarding my calls to voicemail for the rest of the day? Henderson let me take a half-day.” He said it loud enough that Vasquez could hear, and he grinned at the startled noise that definitely came from Hugo’s cubicle.

“Of— Of course, Rhys. Are you—?”

“I’m *swell*, princess.” Rhys tried not to cringe at how unnatural the pet name sounded on his lips. Yeah, Handsome Jack was the only person who could pull off that level of douchebag confidence.

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It was eating at Rhys, not being able to tell Vaughn or Yvette about what happened to him a few weeks ago. Every time he saw one of them (which was very often) he wanted to tell them about it. He wondered if they would even believe him, probably not.

It had been especially hard not telling them about it when they both asked him about the bite mark on his neck, making up some story about a one-night stand with a guy from logistics; he’d specifically picked logistics because he knew Vaughn and Yvette knew nobody from that team so they couldn’t pressure him into telling them who it was.

Word had gotten around that Handsome Jack had sent an email about his performance and pretty much everyone on his team hated him now, jealous that he’d been noticed by the famed CEO. Vasquez was gunning for him harder than ever, threatening to tell everyone that he’d slept his way into the praise, but Rhys knew he couldn’t make such an accusation without proof unless he wanted Handsome Jack to throw him out of an airlock.

Rhys was still checking in on his sugar daddies, though he hadn’t done a show in a few weeks because he was too afraid to be faced with **JackDaddy69** now that he knew who it actually was. He was receiving a lot of grief about it, the greedy fucks not happy enough with just pictures now that he’d already done some cam shows. Regardless, he was still receiving gifts in the mail and, although the money flow wasn’t quite as good as when he did shows, he still had cash to spare from what he was making.

Once Rhys did go back to doing cam shows (because he had expensive taste and was used to his lavish lifestyle) he couldn’t help but notice Jack was never there. He never responded to Rhys’ invites, never accepted them, nothing. It was... Disappointing, to say the least. It wasn’t like he didn’t understand it, though. Handsome Jack was the most desired man in the universe (okay, that might be a stretch since like, all of Pandora hated him), he could have anyone he wanted. Rhys had been fleeting object of desire that Handsome Jack had gotten his hands on and had thrown away like a used piece of trash. At least Rhys had the opportunity to experience the real thing.

Naturally, after nearly two months of static from Jack he assumed that whatever exciting little thing they had going on was over. He prioritized a different sugar daddy, a man in his fifties that looked somehow familiar but Rhys wasn’t sure how. He didn’t delve into the kind of thing he’d done with Jack, still keeping it online while flirting with the idea that *maybe* the man could take him out to dinner one day. He doubted it would ever happen, though, instead milking the man for heaps of cash in exchange for private cam shows. He was learning.

So, when Rhys found a little box neatly wrapped in shiny Hyperion yellow paper and a black bow on top he nearly fainted. He was used to gifts, obviously, but never at his front door. But there it was, sitting on the floor at his feet, Rhys’ hand trembling where it was holding his key card out to unlock

the door. All he could think was *How did somebody get my address?* followed by *I'm so glad I got home before Vaughn did.*

Rhys debated picking it up, afraid it might be a bomb, or maybe it had some bio-weapon on the paper that would absorb into his skin on contact and kill him instantly. He shook his head with a scowl, reminding himself that he wasn't high enough up the corporate ladder to be the target of an expensive assassination. With a deep breath, he bent down and scooped the little present up, closing his eyes only for a second just in case it *was* going to explode.

It didn't. Rhys let out a breath he didn't know he was holding and finally made his way into the apartment, skidding to a stop when he saw Vaughn and Cathy on the couch. Oh, so he didn't get home before Vaughn... Then the gift must have been delivered after. Did the delivery man not knock when he dropped it off? Whatever the case may have been Rhys quickly shoved the gift into the bag slung over his shoulder, not wanting any unwanted questions from Vaughn.

"Hey, bro!" Vaughn said cheerily from the couch, and Cathy gave a shy wave from where she was sitting at his side under Vaughn's arm.

"Hey," Rhys said flatly, a little irked by Cathy's presence but also itching to know what was in the little box. He ignored the questioning look Vaughn gave him as he brushed past the couch and went straight for his room, closing the door behind him. He pulled the box from his bag before he dropped the bag to the floor, kicking it into a corner of his room. He sat down on his bed gingerly, activating his ECHOeye to scan the package for any threats. Nothing.

Rhys' long fingers pulled at the bow, the delicate design falling apart as he did so. He carefully pulled the paper off, partly because it was too pretty to rip and partly because he literally couldn't rip it. Like, at all. It wasn't until he had pulled the paper from the box that he realized that a lot of the weight to the gift was from the paper itself, and when he activated his ECHOeye again he scanned the paper for details about what it was made of instead of whether or not it was going to hurt him.

It was literally frickin' *gold*. Rhys' mouth gaped open as he stared at the literal twenty-four carat gold, carefully setting it aside because he was totally going to sell that for a lot of money later. He ran his fingers over the velvety box that had been inside, wondering what kind of pretty jewelry it was going to be. A necklace? Earrings? His eyes glittered as he opened the lid, heart hammering with anticipation. He wasn't expecting what he saw, however.

It was... A ring, per se, just not for a finger. It was a cock ring, the same glittery gold as the wrapping paper, and Rhys' ECHOeye confirmed that it was of the same twenty-four carat nature as well. It definitely wasn't the first time Rhys had received a lewd gift, but expensive *and* lewd? That was new. He squinted as he saw letters on it, some kind of engraving, and Rhys used his ECHOeye once again to zoom in on the letters.

*'Property of Handsome Jack'*

Rhys screamed, like, actually screamed, nearly dropping the box in his surprise. Wait... Jack was done with him, he was sure of it. So what the hell was this? At least that explained how it ended up at his apartment... He wasn't sure it was appropriate to feel safer knowing Jack had sent it, but he did because at least he didn't have a stalker sending him things.

Suddenly, Vaughn burst through the door and Rhys snapped the box closed, tucking it under his pillow. He gazed at his friend with wide eyes, who was staring back with the same look.

"Spider," Rhys said before Vaughn could even ask, chuckling nervously. He waved his bro off casually, mouthing a silent *'sorry'* before the shorter man turned and left. He waited a few extra

seconds to make sure Vaughn wasn't coming back before he pulled the present back out from under his pillow, opening the little black box to stare at the gift in wonder.

It wasn't until now he realized that there was a little piece of paper situated between the cock ring and the shiny silk it was resting on. He tugged the paper free, setting the box down on his lap as he unfolded the piece of paper. It was a thick card stock, close to that of a business card, and the paper was black to contrast against the gold silk it had been sitting on. The letters on the paper were etched in gold script, glittery and dazzling to look at. Honestly, it was all very tacky and over-the-top but Rhys loved it.

*'Dinner. Friday. 8:30.*

*The Top.*

*Don't be late.'*

"What," Rhys blanched in such disbelief he sounded dumb to his own ears. Was this real? It couldn't be, it was definitely a joke. Jack probably decided he was going to space Rhys because he was a liability but wanted to fuck with him before hand. Was Rhys still going to show? Duh. He didn't see why not. If it was a trap and he didn't show up, Hyperion security would find him and kill him anyway. So, why not hope?

As it all sank in Rhys was shook with excitement, his fingers curling tightly around the piece of paper only to quickly release it so as not to crinkle the edges. He had a dinner date. With Handsome Jack. At *The Top*. He didn't even think he had anything nice enough to wear to a restaurant that fancy.

The name was self explanatory. It was at the very top of Helios, on the opposite pillar as Handsome Jack's penthouse, of course. Well, it wasn't literally the top. There were rumors that Jack had left the top floors vacant because he didn't want anyone to have as good of a view as he did from his penthouse, so it was technically a few floors down from the literal top. Rhys had never been there, never even dreamed of walking by the damn place so all he knew about it was rumors. Supposedly, the floor was made of glass so the Flora and Fauna department of R&D was visible beneath it, leaving its guests with spectacular views of different, vibrant vegetation from various planets.

The part that Rhys was most excited for (other than the supposedly amazing food) was the Observation Deck. The Observation Deck was a sectioned off part of the restaurant that only the richest, most notorious people of Helios had the opportunity to make a reservation at. Technically, it was an unfinished part of Helios that was converted into an elegant bar and seating area. It apparently hung open in space, with only the thin membrane of an Oxygen Station to separate guests from twinkling stars and the absolute void of space. It was rumored to be as beautiful as it was frightening, and Rhys had no doubt the most notorious person on Helios would reserve a table there.

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Jack was going to lose his goddamn mind.

It had nearly been two months of him avoiding Rhys at all costs and he still couldn't stop thinking about the little shit. He'd called Nisha complaining about it more than once and frankly, she was sick of it, too. It was supposed to be one and done, get it out of his system like he'd said. So why was he having wet dreams about the twink like a goddamn teenager?

Rhys was literally all he could think about. In boring meetings, in the shower, late at night in bed just before he fell asleep. There was always little flashes of their encounter at the edges of his mind, taunting him. It was like having a taste had made his want turn into a *need*, hungry and craving more. What was worst of all was that he kept thinking about all the things he'd wanted to do but hadn't

gotten the chance to, like tracing those tattoos with his tongue or watching that ass bounce on his cock the way it did on the replica dildo Rhys seemed to be so fond of.

And kissing. They'd never kissed and it was driving Jack crazy. He didn't even *like* kissing that much. It was too intimate and most people were crap at it. But Rhys' lips looked so goddamn kissable and judging by how talented his mouth was on his cock he was pretty sure that would reflect in a kiss as well.

Jack angrily smacked a cup of pens off of his desk, watching them scatter across the floor noisily. He was standing in front of his desk, glaring down at the little wrapped present he'd put together because Jack had no self control when it came to himself and his desires. It was a bad idea, he knew it. Jack wasn't *gay*, goddamn it. How many times did he have to tell himself? But still, he couldn't seem to force down the thrill of excitement the tickled down his spine and he slammed his fists down angrily on the desk, hard enough that the little neatly wrapped box skittered around a little.

He held himself like that, hunched over his desk leaning on his hands, glaring at the offending box like he wasn't the one who'd put it there. At this point he didn't know what was worse, the fact that he was still caught up on this guy or that he was really struggling with himself this much about going through with sending the gift. Both were pathetic, and Handsome Jack was *not* pathetic.

"Fuck it," Jack said in a hysterical tone, putting his arms up in the air as if to say, *'I'm fucked anyway what the hell does it matter?'* He brought his hands up to scrub at the mask on his face, groaning in irritation. Handsome freakin' Jack didn't half ass things. If he was gonna do this sugar daddy crap then he was gonna do it right, throw on all the bells and whistles. Eventually, he'd get bored like he did with everything (and everyone) else in his life and then he could finally put this to bed. He figured the more committed he was to the whole thing the quicker he'd get sick of it.

Jack scooped up the little box that had cost him a small fortune (and while it was a small fortune it was just barely a few ticks in Jack's enormous bank accounts), tossing it up in the air a few times. He spun around on his heel and threw the gift down the stairs that led up to his desk at a little mail bot, laughing obnoxiously when it thunked off the top of what Jack assumed would be a head in robot anatomy.

"You got the address, shit for brains?" Jack shouted down to the robot, arms crossed across his chest. The little robot picked up the box and placed it in a receptacle that opened up on the front of its body, a high-pitched robotic voice confirming the address back to Jack. With the confirmation Jack sent the robot on its way, pushing down the excited thrill he felt wash over him.

# Chapter 7

## Chapter Summary

Rhys gets taken to the dinner of his dreams (and also nightmares at some points) and Jack stakes his claim.

## Chapter Notes

yooooooooo this bad boy is a long one. I'm talkin 9k of goodness, I got a lil out of hand.

Thank you all for your amazing comments and I hope you enjoy!! (P.S. still unbeta'd.)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

If Rhys were to say he was nervous it would be such an incredible understatement. If someone asked (which they couldn't because nobody knew) if Rhys was nervous, he'd probably laugh right in their face and then probably throw up a little bit. He'd been nervous all week, every minute of every hour spent worrying about this damn dinner. He was distracted from work and could hardly talk to his friends because he was too afraid he'd suddenly yell *'I'm going on something like a date with Handsome Jack this Friday!'*

Date was probably a little too heavy of a word but what else would someone call dinner at the most expensive restaurant on Helios? And then that thought would get Rhys cycling back on himself wondering what the intentions of this whole thing were, was he actually going to be thrown off the side of the Observation Deck while the rich snobs of Helios laughed at his cold, dead body? This was why nervous was an understatement.

Rhys had wanted to die when Vaughn and Yvette suggested hanging out Friday night, and while that sounded like a great time it's not like he could exact reschedule his dinner plans. The three hardly did anything without each other (save for Vaughn who had a girlfriend now) so it was really, really hard to convince them that he couldn't go without telling them exactly why. Rhys felt like he was going to faint as they questioned him, the real answer always on the tip of his tongue. Thankfully, they eventually relented and instead took to calling him out on bailing on them.

But it was Friday now, he'd gone into work early so he could leave early because he definitely needed as much time as he could possibly get before he actually went to this dinner to mentally prepare himself. Vaughn and Yvette were meeting at a bar right after work so he at least didn't have to worry about running into Vaughn in such fancy clothes and a new hairdo.

Rhys had gone out earlier in the week and spent a disgusting amount of money on something nice to wear. He'd be damned if he showed up under dressed to The Top hanging off of Handsome Jack's arm. He needed to look his absolute best, which meant buying a suit made of wool imported from Dionysus that cost him a few thousand credits.

Rhys looked at himself in the full-body mirror again, biting his lips nervously. He'd decided to go with all black and now he was suddenly wondering if he looked too much like he was going to a

funeral. He wore tapered black slacks that were tailored to fit him perfectly, showing off his long legs and hugging his ass just right. The matching black suit jacket he wore was also tailored specifically for him, narrow in all the right places (which was most of them because Rhys was so damn tall and skinny). He decided to skip a tie, leaving the first three buttons of his black dress shirt open so his tattoos were showing a good amount, shirt tucked into his pants with a black belt around his slim hips.

He looked good, don't get him wrong. The black made everything about him look even longer and, if he was being honestly with himself, he looked like he was ready to walk down a catwalk. He let his tattoos be the pop of color for his outfit, finally deciding that all that black made him look sleek and suave and mysterious. Instead of having his hair slicked straight back like he normally did he gave it a bit more volume, having slicked it back with a bit more of a swooping motion to one side, a few hairs hanging loose across his forehead.

Rhys blinked on his ECHOeye to check the time, his heart hammering as he realized there was only a half hour until their reservation. He needed to leave about now, knowing it was going to take a while to get all the way to the other side of Helios. He smoothed out the front of his clothes as he glanced at the little black box sitting precariously on his dresser, wondering for a moment if he should bring the gift with him. That was probably the point of sending it, right? He picked it up and put the box in his pocket, ignoring the way his hand shook as he did so.

Rhys pulled on his shiny black dress shoes, made sure he had his wallet and his keycard, and promptly tried his hardest not to pass out as he exited his apartment. His footsteps were quick, knees weak with nerves. His face was set in a scowl where he kept his eyes on the floor ahead of him, hands shoved deep into his pockets.

"It's okay, you've already survived one encounter with Handsome Jack. You'll be fine," he muttered to himself, flesh hand nervously toying with the box in his pocket.

It only took him twenty minutes to get to his destination but he'd rather be early than late. After all, the note had specifically told him to not be late but it didn't say anything about leaving early. He was too intimidated by the hostess waiting at the entrance to the restaurant to even attempt to let her know that he was there. Actually, he was intimidated by everything about what was in front of him. The rumors about the glass floor were true and it had taken Rhys a minute to get used to that, his fear of heights almost getting to him; honestly, it probably would have gotten to him if he wasn't so scared about a million other things about this night.

All of the lights in the restaurant were literally floating, gently undulating up and down where they hovered. Each one looked like different colorful tropical flowers, elegant pieces of sculpted glass coming from them in the shape of petals. All the women were wearing elegant gowns, the men in three piece suits. Rhys suddenly felt extremely underdressed, wishing he'd at least worn a tie. He nervously touched at his neck and collar, quickly averting his gaze when the hostess snapped her striking eyes up at him.

Rhys cleared his throat and instead took to window shopping in what was undoubtedly an expensive store beside the restaurant. He felt stupid, drifting awkwardly thirty feet from a restaurant he had no business even being near. God, he hoped Jack was paying. It wasn't like he could actually walk up to the hostess and just casually say, *'Good evening, I have a reservation. It should be under Handsome Jack.'* She'd probably laugh at him and call security.

The ten minutes it took for 8:30 to hit felt like ten hours, but what was really long was the next ten minutes to 8:40, and then 8:50. Rhys was starting to get nervous, maybe this all was just a joke. Maybe Jack was watching a live feed of a security camera laughing his ass off at the fact that Rhys

actually thought Jack was going to treat him to a fancy dinner.

When 9 o'clock hit Rhys was just about ready to leave, face flushed with embarrassment and his pride more than a little hurt. Of course, as these things always go, Jack finally decided to show up, his voice booming across the hall as he approached Rhys.

"Princess!" The man all but shouted, his arms open out at his sides like he was asking for a hug, jacket hanging loosely in his right hand by the collar.

Rhys felt a chill run down his spine at the pet name, the sight of the man making that chill run hot. Rhys had... Never seen Handsome Jack outside of his usual attire. He was wearing dark grey slacks that his strong legs filled out much more than Rhys' thin ones did in his own, a black belt snug around his hips. The dark teal dress shirt he was wearing did wonders for... *Everything*. The sleeves were tight around the man's biceps, contouring to the muscles there, and rolled up to his elbows, giving a nice show of his tattoo and the thick, strong forearms. As tight as the material was on his arms it went the same for his chest, broad and just as imposing as Rhys remembered. Jack had foregone a tie as well, which made Rhys feel a little better, two buttons pried open to show tan skin. The dark teal color of the shirt did wonders for those heterochromatic eyes, making them seem even more shockingly blue and green. The jacket he had slung over his shoulder was a shade darker than his pants, though that didn't really seem to matter as the jacket seemed like more of an accessory than a piece to the outfit.

When Rhys' eyes finally made it up to Jack's he was right in front of him, grinning down at him menacingly. Rhys realized he'd been staring, his cheeks flushing pink at the realization he'd absolutely been checking Jack out. He felt a little better, though, when Jack's eyes dipped down to peer at the ink poking out precariously from the collar of Rhys' shirt. One of Jack's hands came up to pinch Rhys' collar between thumb and forefinger, tugging at the fabric gently.

"Not bad, kitten. Looks like your fashion sense isn't just horrendous skinny ties," Jack teased, laughing at the indignant look Rhys gave him.

"My ties aren't horrendous," Rhys bit back, feeling personally offended by the comment.

"Ooh, feisty, I like it. Not afraid to stand up to big, bad Jack, huh?" Jack leaned in closer, getting into Rhys' personal space and effectively making the younger man lean away nervously. The look on Rhys' face quickly washed away into something more fearful, the fact that Jack still had a grin on his face the only thing grounding him. That grounded feeling quickly vanished when Jack barked a laugh in his face, letting go of his collar and turning away from him before he headed towards the restaurant.

"Come on, don't wanna be late!"

Rhys glared at Jack's broad, sculpted back as he followed a few steps behind him. He opened his mouth to point out that Jack was already late, but he thought better of it and snapped his mouth shut. He took a deep breath to help relax his shoulders as they made it to the hostess, his arm gently brushing Jack's as he came to stand beside the man. He tried not to snicker as the woman's bitchy face quickly fell apart in fear as she saw just who was standing in front of her, looking between the two men in disbelief.

"H-Handsome Jack, sir, what a pleasant surprise!" Her voice was far too squeaky with feigned kindness and she cleared her throat, seemingly realizing her mistake. She quickly looked down at her ECHOpad, scrolling through what was definitely a list of reservations. "It... It appears you don't have a reservation, sir. Would you like to..." Her voice trailed off as she met Jack's gaze again, seemingly stunned into silence. Rhys glanced at Jack, the murderous look on his face enough to

make Rhys look away and it wasn't even directed at him.

"Listen, buttercup. I'd ask you if you know who I am but clearly you do," Jack's voice was teetering somewhere between anger and sickly-sweet, "I don't wanna be the bad guy here and insult your intelligence but *clearly* you're an idiot. Just in case you didn't get the memo, I *own* this freakin' place, sweet cheeks. You pickin' up what I'm putting down?"

The woman was practically shaking, nodding her head mutely in response to Jack's question. Rhys felt bad for her, honestly, he did, but he also was kind of... Into the way Jack was belittling her. For some reason, completely unknown to Rhys, he pulled his cybernetic arm out of his pocket and gently placed it on the back of Jack's arm. Jack flinched a little but didn't address it, so Rhys figured he could keep it there. The woman shot him what seemed him a pleading look and he wondered if it looked like he'd been trying to calm the irate man down in her eyes. She was wrong, if that were the case, Rhys was kind of just turned on by the whole thing.

Her gaze fell on Jack again when the man snapped his fingers obnoxiously in her face. "See, I don't think that you are, because I still don't have a goddamn table." Jack's tone was flatter now, losing interest in the situation and actually just getting angry now. "Do you need me to spell it out for you? I — don't— need— a— reservation," Jack said the words extra slow and deliberate like she couldn't comprehend them.

Everything seemed to click for her now, her hands scurrying to pick up two menus. "Y-Yes! Of course, sir, m-my mistake," she said quickly, hands trembling where they held the menus. She gave an attempt at a what was at best a trembling smile. "Right this way!" She quickly retreated into the restaurant, her impossibly high heels clicking in her wake.

Rhys sympathized with her, he'd felt the same exact way the day he'd walked into that conference room and saw Handsome Jack staring back at him. It was much more enjoyable when he was on the other end of things, more than a little impressed with the way Jack commanded every situation he got himself in.

Rhys followed close behind Jack this time, feeling out of place as every set of eyes in the crowded restaurant followed them. He knew the eyes were for Jack, people shocked to see the CEO out and about, probably terrified of what exactly that meant. Some of those looks were definitely for him, though they held a different sort of insinuation to them when they landed on him. He caught the gazes of a few people, watching as the looks of wonderment they bestowed upon Jack quickly soured at the sight of Rhys. *Jealousy*, Rhys thought, lifting his chin a little bit with pride, a smug look on his face.

His attention was pulled away from the gazes as he heard some shouting to his left, turning his head towards the commotion. He couldn't make out what they were saying but from what he could see an older, very wealthy couple were shouting at some staff in a corner. It didn't take long for him to realize that the table that suddenly freed up must have been theirs, the waiters pulling a new table cloth on and putting out new place settings hurriedly kind of giving it away. Rhys tried not to dwell on the fact that at least three peoples' nights had been ruined because of them.

It was definitely the best seat in the house, and it was in the Observation Deck. Rhys was ready to jump out of his skin with excitement as they passed through the Oxygen Station's barrier, and although it didn't feel much different from being in Helios' simulated gravity Rhys was still overcome with joy. He felt just the slightest bit lighter out here, and he couldn't help but look up at the dome of stars that opened up above him.

Rhys sat down as one of the waiters that set up their table pulled the chair out for him, his eyes still wandering around the view. Their table was right at the edge of the platform, leaving them exposed



to the stars (and the never-ending vacuum of space) on all sides. Rhys made the stupid decision of looking down over the edge, this time his fear of heights getting to him and making him dizzy. He snapped his head up quickly, trying not to make too big of a scene and was grateful to see that Jack hadn't noticed. Rhys thanked the hostess as she set their menus down and told them who would be waiting on them. Jack was draping his jacket over the back of his chair when Rhys looked at him, taking his seat as well. His face was smug as he met Rhys' gaze, resting his elbows on the table as he leaned forward slightly.

"So? Whaddaya think?" Jack was grinning again, the anger gone as quickly as it came.

Rhys returned the grin, suddenly confident as he realized the lengths Jack had gone to for him. "Five frickin' gold stars," Rhys said with a wink of his ECHOeye, wishing he could pat himself on the back for that one because damn, he was clever.

Jack actually, maybe for the first time in his life, looked dumbfounded for a moment. It didn't last long, his face splitting with a bellowing laugh. He definitely let it go on a little too long, wiping at a nonexistent tear in his eye because Jack was a showman and had to be over-the-top in everything he did. When he finally settled down he was looking at Rhys in a way the younger man really couldn't decipher. It was almost... Soft, the wrinkles at the corners of his eyes suggesting his smile might actually be genuine.

"I like you, kiddo."

—

The dinner went... Okay from there? Rhys didn't really know how to feel about it. There was a little bit of time where Rhys complimented the view and mentioned that he'd always wanted to eat there, but it wasn't long before Jack was dominating the conversation. He talked about himself the whole time, which Rhys thought he would have loved but it turned out to be more annoying than anything. Not to mention Rhys pretty much knew all the stuff that Jack was spewing, everyone on Helios did.

Rhys wasn't expecting to find out anything knew about Jack, the man was very private in his day-to-day life. Rhys didn't think one night out meant that Jack was going to tell him more intimate things about his life, he wasn't that naive. But what he also hadn't been expecting was the narcissistic regurgitation of hero stories that Jack just wouldn't let up on. Rhys hardly had any room to talk, didn't even have the room for a comfortable silence to settle at any point.

When their waiter came to take their orders Jack had ordered *for him*, leaving Rhys in a shocked silence. Thankfully a glass of wine had been poured for him to sip on, otherwise Rhys wasn't sure he could have kept his mouth shut. Rhys just sipped his wine as he watched Jack continue to talk with a lazy, half-interested gaze until their food came. Rhys thought maybe the onslaught of over-exaggerated tales would have stopped, or at least slowed down, once they were eating but nope. Jack kept right on talking as he chewed through his steak.

It was when Rhys was about halfway through his dinner that he couldn't take it anymore. Jack was half-laughing half-telling a story about some guy named Timothy when Rhys snapped, tossing his utensils onto his plate with a loud clatter that got Jack to look up at him for the first time in probably twenty minutes with a shocked expression.

"Do you ever stop talking?" Rhys asked incredulously, keeping his momentum only because Jack looked so surprised. "Everyone on the entirety of Helios *knows* all these stories, Jack." Were they on a first name basis? Guess they were now. "And any details that I don't already know make no damn sense to me because you won't even give me the floor long enough to ask any questions!"

“Uh...” Jack said rather lamely, actually at a loss for words.

“Who the hell is Timothy?” Rhys asked spitefully, launching into a tirade. “And why do you keep saying he’s *you*? I literally have no idea what that means. What the *fuck* is a thresher? Or a kraggon, for that matter? Also, total dick move eradicating all the Claptrap units except for one and then taking away his ability to climb stairs. I mean, I get that the little assholes are annoying but you could literally just reprogram them. You’ve only mentioned that you were the greatest programming engineer on Helios about fifty times. And why the hell is it so cold in here?!”

Rhys knew why it was so cold, considering there was only the thin layer of oxygen separating them from cold, dark space, but he was too angry and worked up to think about. He wished he’d thought about it when he picked out his outfit, he would have worn a sweater or something instead. Rhys was literally always cold.

Rhys was startled out of his thoughts when Jack stood up, coming over to his side of the table to drape his suit jacket over Rhys’ shoulders. It was big enough that Rhys fit under it fully without his arms in the sleeves, that musky scent he’d smelled on the man all those weeks ago encircling him, this time minus the gun powder. When Jack sat down again he didn’t say anything, just smiled at Rhys from across the table. It was Rhys’ turn to be surprised, not sure how to react. Jack wasn’t going to yell or put him in his place?

“Sorry, I just—,” Rhys started, only to stop when Jack put a hand up.

“Don’t worry about it, I’m kind of an asshole.” Jack was grinning now, and Rhys couldn’t stop the smile that spread across his own lips. “I *could* answer all those questions for you but I get the feeling I’ve done enough talking.”

Rhys snorted at that, and then they were both laughing. It was... Nice, easy even. Rhys almost wished he’d said something sooner. When the waiter came over he asked to get the rest of his dinner wrapped only to be told that they ‘didn’t do that here.’ Rhys just stared at the guy with a confused look for an uncomfortably long amount of time, the strange interaction finally ending when Jack started laughing. The waiter took that as his cue to scurry away while Rhys asked Jack what the hell he was laughing at.

Even though they had both finished eating and the table had been cleared they finished off their bottle of wine, Rhys finally getting the opportunity to speak. He told Jack some things about himself, like where he went to college and how he’d met Vaughn there. He actually told Jack who Vaughn *was* and Yvette, too. He told him about how he was really drunk the night he’d sent Jack those first pictures and Jack made fun of the way Rhys blushed when he told him.

By the time they finished their bottle of wine most of the restaurant had cleared out. Rhys was feeling a little tipsy, his face warm and flushed with alcohol. Jack didn’t let Rhys look at the bill when he paid, telling him that even his ‘fancy little implant couldn’t comprehend that kind of money.’ Rhys just rolled his eyes and took the last sip he had in his glass.

Jack got up first, stretching his arms above his head with a satisfied sigh. Rhys flinched as he heard several things ‘*pop*’ on the older man’s body, fighting back the urge to make an old man comment; something told Rhys that would hurt Jack’s pride too much even though he wasn’t even close to old. When Rhys stood he moved to take Jack’s jacket off, but the hand that landed on his shoulder and slowly slid down his back told him he could keep it on. They walked like that, Rhys being lead by Jack’s hand on his lower back while he walked by his side.

They made light conversation as they made their way to... Wherever they were going, Rhys was honestly just following Jack’s lead. Rhys would rest his head on Jack’s shoulder whenever he

laughed at something the older man said and Jack would squeeze him a little closer. It wasn't until they were in the Hub of Heroism, all the way back on the other side of Helios, that Rhys realized where they were going.

Rhys was a little confused as to why they'd be going to Jack's office so late but he was excited to see it regardless. It was every fanboy's dream to see the inside of Handsome Jack's office. It was apparently extravagant, high ceilings and waterfalls, a huge window that looked out on Elpis. Maybe he'd get to sit in *the* chair.

It was when they were in the confines of the elevator that went up to Jack's office that the atmosphere seemed to change and Rhys understood why they were going where they were going. The hand that had been at the small of his back dipped lower, the large palm and long fingers having no trouble holding the entirety of Rhys' right ass cheek in it. He could feel goosebumps forming beneath his clothes at the touch, the sensation only intensifying as Jack moved his hand into Rhys' back pocket and gave a firm squeeze.

Rhys hadn't even seen Jack move, the man suddenly crowding him up against the wall of the elevator. Rhys let out a surprised gasp as he was pushed into the cool metal wall behind him and he tilted his head to the side to give Jack more room where he was kissing at his neck. They were pressed flush together from head to toe, one of Jack's knees pressing into Rhys' crotch teasingly.

"Did you bring it?" Jack's voice was husky as he murmured the question against the tattoo on Rhys' neck. Rhys just answered with a confused little noise, turning his face into Jack's neck, lips brushing against the older man's collar bone. Jack chuckled, soft and deep, other hand cupping Rhys' other ass cheek. "*My gift*," he whispered so softly Rhys could hardly hear it, the brush of Jack's breath against his skin more prominent than the words themselves.

Rhys blushed at the reminder of the little box in his pocket. He'd completely forgotten about it, about the implications it held, but the reminder sent a wave of heat through him because he was *supposed* to bring it, and that implication was greater than the first. Rhys took one hand from where he'd rested them on Jack's chest to reach into his pocket, pulling the box free. He moaned when Jack ground his knee into his crotch, his already half-hard cock swelling further. Rhys rolled his hips to meet the grinding of Jack's knee and he felt downright *dirty* when he leaned up to Jack's ear and let out a breathy, choked-off moan.

Jack pushed into him harder at that, really pinning Rhys where he stood. Rhys slid the hand that was still at Jack's chest up over his collarbone, flesh fingers dancing across the skin so lightly it almost tickled the older man. His hand didn't stop there, sliding to cup around the side of Jack's neck, then around the back, stopping finally when his fingers slid into that surprisingly soft hair. He curled his fingers around the strands and shivered as the cool metal of one of the clasps on Jack's mask brushed his cheek, Jack's hands squeezing tighter where they held his ass.

By the time the elevator doors opened Rhys was out of breath, panting in Jack's ear like he'd just run a marathon instead of indulged in a little foreplay. Jack pulled from him too quickly if Rhys' whine was anything to go by. Jack reached a hand out to wrap it around Rhys' where his robotic hand was still holding the little black box, Jack's large hand completely enveloping Rhys' before the older man snatched the box and left the elevator.

Rhys followed behind him like a lost puppy, glad to see that nobody was in any of the cubicles that were clustered together on either side of the hallway they were walking down. It was a short walk but they both felt like it was never going to end. When Jack stopped to get his fingerprint scanned at the door Rhys plastered himself up against Jack's back, wrapping his arms around his chest with a content sigh.

If Rhys thought the walk felt long waiting for the door to Jack's office to open felt impossibly longer. There were so many security measures that it made Rhys dizzy. Fingerprint, passcode, retinal scan, *verbal* passcode. It all seemed so unnecessary, but then again Jack was pretty unnecessary about most of the things he did.

In hindsight Rhys was going to be pretty pissed at himself for not taking in the extravagance that was Handsome Jack's office. It was just so hard to think about anything other than the way Jack had turned on him when the doors finally slid open, eyes hungry and feral. Jack wrapped his arms around Rhys as he caught him in a kiss, *finally*, and both men moaned at the contact. It was sloppy and desperate, both men fighting for dominance although Rhys wasn't ashamed to admit that he'd succumbed because he wanted to, long arms wrapping around Jack's neck.

Jack's jacket fell from Rhys' shoulders at the motion but neither man cared. Jack was too busy running his hands down Rhys' body so he could slide his hands under Rhys' thighs and pull them up so the younger man was forced to wrap his legs around Jack's waist. Rhys held himself upright with an arm around Jack's shoulders and a hand in Jack's hair, the pair barely breaking apart from their kiss enough to take lungfuls of air before they were diving right back into each other.

Jack carried Rhys up the stairs like that, Rhys clinging to him like his life depended on it while their tongues danced between them. When Jack set Rhys down on the edge of his desk he couldn't help but chuckle at the way Rhys refused to let go of him, arms and legs still holding him like a vice. Jack loved it.

Rhys started grinding his hips against Jack's, desperate for more of the man. They both paused from their kiss to laugh breathlessly against each other's lips as Rhys toed his shoes off and they bounced noisily down the stairs, but Rhys' chuckles faded into desperate whimpers as Jack's hands started to roam. Those big, strong hands that Rhys literally *dreamed* about were ruthless in their exploration, each touch rough and demanding in a way that had Rhys practically whimpering on every breath. He wasn't sure what the hell he was doing right in life to deserve all of this.

Jack's hands were at the collar of his shirt now, halting in their onslaught of groping Rhys anywhere they could reach. Rhys pulled back from where he'd tucked himself into the crook of Jack's neck just enough so that he could meet the older man's gaze. Jack looked so... Enraptured, staring at Rhys the way he was, like he was observing something fragile and beautiful for the first time. It made Rhys tingle all over knowing that that look was for *him*.

Rhys was leaning up for a kiss when Jack's gaze flickered to something less vulnerable and much, much more hostile. Jack's gaze was like a fire burning a hole straight through Rhys and the younger man just couldn't tear his gaze away. Their lips just barely brushed and Rhys let his eyes flutter closed, not noticing the way Jack's soft, prodding fingers at his chest and collar were now curling around the front of his shirt, a hand at each side where the fabric was parted from the open buttons.

Jack deepened the kiss, forced his tongue past Rhys' lips as his hands *pulled*, the sound of fabric tearing and buttons popping free echoing through the high ceilings. Rhys sat up a little straighter and let out a surprised sound against Jack's lips, only pulling away when he finally realized what had just happened.

"This shirt was expensive!" Rhys complained, though he didn't stop Jack from pushing the silky fabric off his shoulders along with the blazer he'd been wearing. When all he got back was a smirk Rhys returned it with a glare, though judging by Jack's chuckles he must not have looked very threatening.

"Oh, come on. Don't pout, princess," Jack murmured as he brushed the pads of his thumbs over each of Rhys' nipples. Jack's smirk curled into a grin when Rhys' pout melted from his face with a

pleasured gasp of breath. "I'll buy you a new one, how 'bout that?" Jack leaned down to nip at Rhys' neck, appreciating the way the younger man trembled under his hands.

"Wasn't pouting," Rhys grumbled despite the way he arched into Jack's touch, his own hands tugging Jack's shirt from where it was tucked into his pants so he could slide them underneath and run them up the older man's broad back. He smirked at the way Jack hissed, no doubt at the cold touch of Rhys' cybernetic hand, but then relaxed under the advances. "You'll buy me a *better* one, right, daddy?" His tone was barely a whisper, face so close to Jack's their noses were nearly touching.

Jack practically growled in response and brought a hand up to grip at Rhys' hair, pulling his head back none too lightly. The way Rhys moaned made Jack's cock twitch and Jack arched his back against Rhys' biting fingernails along his shoulder blades. "Look at you, making demands like you own the freakin' place. You'll be lucky if I get you anything after that." Something told Rhys that Jack meant that, though he thought he was far from a fancy new shirt considering Jack had dipped down to run his tongue along one of the tattoos on Rhys' chest.

"Say you're sorry baby, and *maybe* I'll forgive you," Jack murmured against Rhys' skin, biting at a taut nipple.

Rhys was going to apologize, he really was, but Jack was biting and sucking at his nipples with such ferocity that he couldn't think straight. He'd pulled his robotic hand from under Jack's shirt so he could tangle it into the man's hair instead, his head tipped back and lips parted as he whimpered against the ministrations. It wasn't until Jack gave a hard tug at his hair and pulled back that Rhys remembered he was supposed to say something. But Jack wasn't just pulling away from his chest, he was pulling back completely, forcing Rhys to untangle his legs from where they'd been wrapped around his waist the whole time. The only thing that was connecting them now was Jack's fist in his hair, still tight like a vice.

"*Apologize*," Jack growled, lips curled into a snarl. He almost felt bad as he watched Rhys' eyes start to glisten with unshed tears, *almost*.

"I-I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" Rhys stammered, hands reaching out for Jack only to be jerked back further away from the man by his hair. Rhys knew Jack wasn't *actually* mad, that this was all just a power play, but he couldn't stop his heart from hammering in his chest with worry. Jack was looking at him expectantly, like he expected more. "Daddy—," Rhys whimpered as the grip in his hair loosened only to tug tight again, "daddy, please, I'm so sorry."

To both Rhys' relief and displeasure Jack let go of his hair though he didn't move back into Rhys' open legs. Instead, Rhys watched him move around to the other side of the desk, taking a seat in the large yellow chair. Rhys had his neck turned, looking at Jack over his shoulder, unsure if he should follow.

Jack leaned his elbow on an arm rest and propped his temple against his fist. He was looking at Rhys with a lazy, almost bored look on his face, and he loved the way it made Rhys squirm nervously. He motioned Rhys over with a casual motion of his fingers with his other hand, eyebrow quirked as if to ask, '*aren't you coming?*'

Rhys tried not to look too eager as he scooted off the desk and made his way over to Jack. The older man swiveled his chair so he was facing Rhys, eyes raking over his body like he was a starved man staring at a piece of meat. "Strip," he said simply, eyes flicking back up to meet Rhys' gaze. Jack parted his legs wide and Rhys unashamedly stared at Jack's crotch, at the very evident bulge where that perfect cock was straining against its confines.

Rhys wasted no time ridding himself of his clothes, though once he was naked he wished he'd maybe taken it a little slower. He felt so vulnerable now, standing completely naked in front of Handsome Jack, wishing he'd started using Vaughn's exercise bike like his bro had told him to. But Jack looked pleased at what he saw, his lips tugged in a half smirk at one corner.

"You're a pretty boy, huh, Rhysie?" Jack purred, lifting his head from his casual perch. Jack was enjoying the way his words made Rhys flush and fidget where he stood, watched his hands clasp behind his back in what was no doubt an attempt to keep them from covering himself embarrassingly. Jack reached forward to run his thumb over the slit of Rhys' cock, smearing the precum there in a circular motion around the head. Rhys whined and bucked his hips forward, taking a step closer to Jack so he was standing between the man's knees.

Jack pulled his hand away to instead work his own pants open, giving his cock an appreciative stroke when he freed it. His other hand reached for a drawer in his desk, pulling the right one open and fetching what he was looking for with such a practiced ease that Rhys was definitely sure he'd done it a thousand times before. Rhys fumbled to catch the small bottle that was thrown his way, not expecting Jack to toss it so suddenly.

Jack patted his lap invitingly, licking his lips as Rhys took another step closer. "Come sit on daddy's lap." The way Rhys' cock twitched at the invitation didn't go unnoticed, Jack chuckling wickedly at the way it bobbed between Rhys' legs.

The first thing Rhys did once he was straddling Jack's lap was pull his shirt open, though he didn't do it with the same animosity that Jack had done to his own. He quickly popped each button, pushing the fabric back from Jack's shoulders once he had it open, the little bottle of lube resting in Jack's lap between them for the time being. *Yes*, those were the abs Rhys had been *dying* to see. His fingers danced along the ridges of the muscles, tracing the defined shapes, fingers dipping lower as he traced the sharp 'V' that lead him down to Jack's cock.

"You like what you see, pumpkin?" Jack was teasing, Rhys could tell, but he nodded anyway because *damn*. The only other person Rhys knew that had abs like that was Vaughn, and even his seemed soft and unfinished compared to what Jack was packing. "I know, I'm perfect, right?"

Rhys met Jack's cocky grin with an eye roll, because no matter how true Rhys thought that statement was it was still far too egomaniacal for him to admit such. Rhys let out an *embarrassing* squeak and jerked his hips forward when Jack pinched his ass, quickly leaning forward to hide his face in Jack's chest.

"What the hell was that for?!" Rhys grumbled in irritation, fighting down another squeak when Jack repeated the action. "Cut it out!"

"Aw, don't be like that, kitten. You know you like it." And then Jack was slipping a slick finger inside Rhys without warning, pushing in right to the third knuckle.

Rhys moaned and rolled his hips down against Jack's hand, thighs squeezing Jack tight on either side. When the *hell* had the sly bastard slicked his fingers? If Rhys wasn't so intent on fucking himself onto Jack's fingers he might have cared more, but frankly, he was over it. Rhys took to writhing against Jack, breathless as he pleaded for another finger.

"Greedy, greedy little thing, aren't you?" Jack murmured against Rhys' temple as he continued to work Rhys open. "Patience is a virtue and all that jazz."

Jack spent far too long teasing Rhys with just one finger, the poor thing panting and murmuring nonsensical pleas as he tried to get Jack to do *more*. The hand on his dick made Rhys buck his hips,

and he could have cried in relief if the hand wasn't there to *deny* Rhys more than anything. He could feel the cool metal of the gold cock ring sliding down his cock, the chill of it making Rhys soften up just enough that Jack could get the ring around his balls as well. Rhys had forgotten all about his present, and the lick of excitement and fear that crawled up his spine had him shivering.

Rhys pushed himself back from Jack's chest finally, sitting back on his haunches so he could look at the older man. He opened his mouth to say something but was cut short as Jack finally, *fucking finally* pushed a second finger in and curled them with such precision right into Rhys' prostate that the younger man shouted. His hands flew forward to grip Jack's shoulders, fingers digging into the tan skin as Jack *just kept fucking* Rhys' prostate with the pads of his fingers. It was too much and not enough all at once, and Jack seemed to sense that because he was shoving in a third finger and Rhys was seeing *stars*.

"Fuck, fuck," Rhys panted, thighs trembling and toes curling from the pleasure. Jack started a bit more of a thrusting motion again, though he kept a near-constant pressure on the little bundle of nerves that had Rhys practically singing for him. Rhys sobbed as a big hand smacked his ass, cock twitching violently between them as if he was going to come but the cock ring kept him from any semblance of relief.

This went on for too long, also, in Rhys' opinion. He was shaking above the older man, his body crying out for release, the head of his dick swollen and red and leaking precum. By the time Jack finally stopped finger-fucking him he was bent forward, leaning against Jack's shoulders with his back curved in a pretty arch so Jack could hook his chin over his shoulder and appreciate how good the tan skin of his hand contrasted against Rhys' pale, fleshy cheeks.

Jack patted Rhys' butt gently to get him to sit up on his knees properly again, and the younger man obeyed. Jack took a moment to appreciate the sight before him. Rhys' eyes were glazed over with pleasure, cheeks flushed red and lips swollen where he must have been biting them. He was panting, open-mouthed, and his pretty hairstyle was coming undone in places. Jack raked his fingernails down Rhys' chest, enjoying the way Rhys' closed his eyes and shivered as he arched into the touch.

"You look like you want something," Jack said smugly, grinning as Rhys looked down at him through his eyelashes, "you want something, kitten?"

Rhys nodded silently and rolled his hips back against Jack's dick where it was sitting snug between Rhys' cheeks. Jack let out a rumbling laugh at Rhys' eagerness, both hands moving to cup each round globe. He pulled them apart so he could nudge his dick between them before he squeezed the soft flesh around his cock and gave a slow thrust. Jack groaned at the friction, finally getting some action for himself, and Rhys moaned, too, because he was just a dirty slut like that.

"I can't give you what you want if you don't tell me what it is," Jack murmured, loving the way Rhys glared at him because yeah, he was being an asshole for sure. He knew Rhys liked it, though.

Rhys leaned forward and pressed a kiss to Jack's jaw, running his tongue along the defined edge of it until he got to his earlobe. He bit the fleshiest part and pressed his lips right against Jack's ear when he moaned at the way Jack rolled his hips up into him again. If Jack wanted to play dirty, he could play dirty, too.

"*Jack*," Rhys whispered into his ear, smirking as he felt Jack grip his ass tighter at the use of his name. "*I want you to fuck me, Jack.*"

There wasn't much preamble after that. Jack grabbed the lube off the desk (Rhys still had no idea when he'd put it there) and slicked his dick up like his life depended on it. Rhys raised himself up so he could hover above Jack's cock, just barely nudging the tip at his entrance. Jack gripped his hips

and held him there for a little while, just *barely* lifting his hips so the tip would prod but not enter.

“Jack, Jack *please*,” Rhys hadn’t even realized he was begging, his mouth working without much feedback from his brain. He was valiantly trying to move his hips down onto Jack’s cock but the grip the older man had on him was tight like a vice. It was still tight like a vice when Jack suddenly pulled Rhys down *hard* onto his cock, manipulating Rhys’ thinner frame without a problem.

Rhys screamed as he was slammed into, head tossed back and fingers digging into Jack’s shoulders. It hurt, definitely, but it also felt *amazing*. He was so full, almost *too* full, but Jack had prepped him for what felt like hours so his body was quick to adjust. Then Jack was pulling him up again only to slam him right back down, making Rhys sob in pleasure. Rhys felt Jack’s grip on his hips let up a little, taking that as his cue to take control; well, at least take as much control as a person could in Handsome Jack’s presence.

Rhys started bouncing on that perfect, *perfect* cock that Rhys swore was made for him. He must have voiced as much out loud because Jack was chuckling below him, the sound deep and lustful. Rhys was too lost in pleasure to be embarrassed, however, and suddenly he couldn’t stop himself from talking.

“So perfect, daddy, your cock is so *fucking perfect*,” Rhys rambled, bouncing faster with a desperate moan, “I love feeling that big cock inside me, filling me up so— *ahh!*” Jack started snapping his hips up to meet each one of Rhys’ downward strokes, a strong hand suddenly wrapped around his throat. Rhys tilted his head back, welcoming it, eyes rolling into the back of his head as Jack *squeezed*.

“Shut,” Jack gave a hard thrust, “your dirty,” *thrust*, “*freakin’*,” oh wow that one hit the right spot, Rhys letting out a choked moan (literally, Jack was almost squeezing too tight), “*mouth*.” Jack growled the last word through clenched teeth, sounding deranged.

A twinge of fear ran up Rhys’ spine and he was ashamed at how much that turned him on. Jack wasn’t going to hurt him, not in any way Rhys wouldn’t absolutely love (he had no idea where this confidence in Jack came from because the man was fuckin’ insane and Rhys *knew* that), but the fear that he could (and if Jack wanted to, he *would*) made Rhys’ cock twitch and leak a thick bead of precum.

Rhys’ hands were at Jack’s wrist now, long fingers wrapped around the tattoo there. Jack loosened his grip just enough for Rhys to take a gasping breath, his red face fading to more of a pink. Rhys had lost any semblance of control he had, the hand that was still on his hip squeezing tight so Rhys couldn’t move. Jack was fucking up into him mercilessly, grunting and snarling like an animal.

Rhys wanted to come, he wanted to come *so* bad. His dick was starting to hurt from being denied for so long and he was starting to feel a little lightheaded. Jack seemed like he was close, though, his thrusts getting just a bit more erratic. Rhys was hoping Jack would be kind enough to let him come once the older man did.

Rhys whimpered when Jack yanked him forward by the grip on his throat, the whimper stretching into a long whine when Jack ran his tongue over the port on Rhys’ temple. Fuck, he forgot how sensitive it was. Jack seemed pleased by that, a low rumble in his chest as he did it again and Rhys could hardly think.

“Say you’re mine,” Jack’s lips were pressed against his ear as he growled the words, “*fucking say it*.”

It took Rhys a second to gather his thoughts, what with a cock railing into him and a hand at his throat could you really blame him? He took a few gasping breaths and fought down the moans



because Jack was not slowing up to give Rhys a second to talk. “I-I’m—,” he was cut off by a throaty moan as Jack brushed his prostate with the head of his cock. Jack squeezed his throat in what was definitely a threat. “I’m yours, I’m yours!” Rhys said quickly, and then it was happening.

Jack had pulled the cock ring free and Rhys was coming, untouched, screaming Jack’s name over and over and *over* through a litany of curses as he painted their chests with what seemed like a never-ending stream of cum. He was definitely going to leave scratches on Jack’s wrist where his fingers were squeezing tight from the force of his orgasm (luckily Rhys had the foresight to grip the back of Jack’s chair with his cybernetics or else he very well might have broken the older man’s wrist accidentally).

“That’s right, baby. You’re *mine*,” Jack said gruffly before his hips were stuttering, coming inside Rhys with a loud moan.

Rhys’ vision went blank for a moment, the overwhelming sensations essentially making his brain reboot (not literally, though, because it did that sometimes when his ECHOeye was malfunctioning). When his vision came back Jack was letting go of his throat and easing him down against his chest, and Rhys was *so* thankful because he was pretty much boneless after all that. They were both breathing heavily, Jack’s arms wrapped around Rhys loosely, big palms splayed out across Rhys’ back.

Rhys tried not to get *too* excited about the way Jack was holding him, telling himself it was just the exhaustion and all the endorphins pumping through their bodies. Handsome Jack wasn’t a romantic, and if he *was*, Rhys was pretty sure he wouldn’t be the one on the other side of those affections. But he could pretend, right?

So Rhys let himself pretend, nuzzling closer into Jack’s warmth. He could feel the older man’s heartbeat where his ear was resting against his chest and Rhys closed his eyes, letting the sound calm him. Rhys placed his hands gently, tentatively on Jack’s sides, the touch more of a question than anything. Jack just hummed in response, head tipped back to lean against the back of his chair, eyes closed. Rhys could feel the sound rumble through that broad chest, tickling the skin on his cheek.

“No more shows, got it?” Jack murmured, and although his voice was almost soft in the afterglow of his orgasm anyone with half a brain knew that almost every statement Jack made was either a command or a threat- or both.

Oh, wait, what? Rhys was pretty sure he heard that wrong. “Hmm?” He hummed tiredly, tilting his head so he could look up at Jack. He couldn’t see much of Jack’s face at this angle, mostly just his neck and chin and the clasp that was there holding his mask in place. But then Jack was tilting his head to look down at him and yeah, okay, now he could see his face. He looked... Angry, which was unsettling after having quite frankly the best sex Rhys had ever had in his life. He was pretty sure he thought that the first time they fucked, too, and both times he thought it were true.

Rhys was startled into sitting up straighter when Jack gripped his chin between thumb and forefinger, the sudden movement causing Jack’s now soft cock to slip out of him. He shivered at the feeling, very much wishing Jack’s cum *wasn’t* dripping down his thighs while he was being forced to stare the man in the face.

“This sugar baby shit? It’s done,” Jack said simply, glaring down at Rhys’ blushing face. How did Jack always make him feel like that, like he was looking *down* at him? They were practically eye-to-eye at the moment.

“What... What do you mean?” Rhys asked, feeling dumb for having asked. Jack looked like he was getting angrier by the second, his grip tightening on Rhys’ chin.

“*I mean*,” Jack seethed, “no more talking to anyone else from that creepy ass website. No more fucking yourself on camera, no more sending strangers naked pictures of yourself. If this,” Jack shook Rhys by the chin for emphasis, “is going to happen, *I’m* the only one. You catch all that, pumpkin?”

Well, when he put it like that... Rhys couldn’t stop himself from reveling in the pure *possessiveness* of everything Jack had just said. So Jack... Wanted this to continue under the stipulation that Rhys wasn’t allowed to talk to or be associated in any way with any of his other sugar daddies. Why was that turning him on so much?

“Done,” Rhys said, wincing at how quickly he’d answered. It was a no-brainer, Jack as his one and only sugar daddy? Hell. Yes.

The angry look Jack had been giving him stretched into a predatory grin, which was equally as terrifying but at least now it was the good kind of terrifying. Jack let go of his chin and patted his cheek in such a way that Rhys was *pretty* sure was meant to be belittling.

“Glad we’re on the same page. Handsome Jack doesn’t share his toys.”

Ouch. Being called a toy coupled with Jack shooing him off his lap was probably one of the worst ways Rhys had come down from an orgasmic high, but he could manage. Rhys shimmied off of Jack’s lap and collected his clothes, surprised when Jack pressed himself up against him when he had his back turned. These mixed signals were going to be the death of him.

“Bathroom’s over there,” Jack murmured against his shoulder before he was heading in that direction, Rhys awkwardly trailing behind with his clothes clutched to his chest.

They fucked two more times that night. In the shower in Jack’s very expensive, very amazing bathroom that was attached to his office (which, if his *office* bathroom looked like this what the *hell* did his actual bathroom look like), and then again when Rhys was about to leave. Jack had shoved him up against the door of his office when Rhys was just about to reach it and kissed him so hard Rhys thought his lips were going to bruise.

By the time Rhys got home Vaughn was already in bed and when he checked the time he was extremely glad that tomorrow was Saturday because there was no way in hell he would have been able to get up for work. He was out like a light once he hit the bed, and if he dreamed of Jack then that was his business.

## Chapter End Notes

Rhys' hairstyle is supposed to be the way he wears it when Loaderbot is dragging him through Pandora, I did my best at describing it lol.

## Chapter 8

### Chapter Summary

Rhys' spoiled life as Handsome Jack's sugar baby has been going quite well for the past several months, so when Jack invited him to a trade dinner Rhys is more than ecstatic. But maybe it's a little more than Rhys bargained for...

### Chapter Notes

Listen guys, I'm going on vacation on Saturday so there's going to be a whole week without updates. I'm very sorry in advance.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Rhys was *spoiled*. Like, it was actually kind of gross. It had started off kind of slow at first. Once Jack made sure Rhys wasn't going to be using the sugar daddy website anymore he'd given the younger man his personal contact so he wouldn't be 'tempted' to talk to any of his- now former-daddies. Rhys had been over the moon about having *Handsome Jack's* personal contact information; sometimes he just stared at the series of numbers in complete awe the first few days he'd had it.

Not that he used it much, he wasn't stupid enough to call Handsome Jack casually. Actually, Jack had made it very clear that he wasn't *ever* allowed to call him, it was really just so Rhys could answer when Jack was ready to reach out. Rhys wasn't even tempted to test the boundaries on that, not with the way Jack had told him so *casually* that Rhys would be hunted down and thrown out an airlock (or some other equally horrific means of murder) if he so much as butt-dialed Jack (not that he really risked doing such considering it was physically impossible to sit on his own head).

But back to the spoiling, because that was Rhys' favorite part- okay, second favorite, the sex was definitely first. When Rhys told Jack that he needed the money he was bringing in from the website Jack had asked him why with the most uninterested look on his face that Rhys was worried his excitement to keep fucking Handsome Jack had screwed him out of the much-needed income. He was (pleasantly) surprised when he told Jack his job alone didn't pay enough for him to pay for his (ludicrous) rent and Jack had taken it upon himself to automatically have Rhys' half wired to his account every month.

Oh, but it got better. The more Jack took him places, the more fancy clothes Rhys got. Sure, Jack made backhanded comments about how Rhys' wardrobe wasn't fit to be worn in the presence of a *king* (yes, he'd called himself kind and yes, it turned Rhys on) but Rhys couldn't really seem to care because his closet was starting to get *stuffed*. Surprisingly, he never got anything too tacky, but he figured that was because Jack was supposed to be the one attracting attention, not Rhys.

When Jack threw an exact copy of his credit card across his desk (after having just fucked Rhys over said desk) without even looking in the younger man's direction Rhys thought he was dreaming. He'd hesitantly picked up the metal card, all gold and shiny in his hands, embarrassed by the way his heart fluttered when he saw Jack's name etched into the card with his own under it. It was just there to

state him as an authorized user so he didn't get shot on sight at the prospect he might have *stolen* the card, but it still made his heart flutter.

"If you take advantage of it, it's gone," Jack had said without looking up from his computer. Rhys had just nodded silently and left Jack's office.

Rhys was good about using it only when he needed to, mostly. At first he only used it to buy lunch when his own bank account was barren and occasionally got ballsy enough to use it for his and Vaughn's and Yvette's beer tabs. He made sure his friends never saw the card because he was still pretty sure Jack didn't want anyone knowing, although the looks he got from workers when they saw his name next to Jack's on the card made Rhys feel all smug and proud. If he wasn't so scared of Jack's first threat on his life he might have taken the shared credit card as a sign that he didn't care if anyone knew now, but Rhys was a very literal man and until Jack told him otherwise there was no way in hell he was going to tell his friends.

It wasn't until Rhys was giving Jack a blowjob under his desk while he was on a conference call a few weeks after he'd given Rhys the credit card that he'd said anything about it. He'd muted the call and asked Rhys why he wasn't using the card and Rhys had glared up at him because, hello, can't answer questions with a dick in the mouth. Jack pulled him off and gestured at Rhys with his hand as if to say, 'go ahead, I'm listening.'

"I do use it," Rhys had mumbled as he tried to look at *Jack* and not the huge cock in his face.

"Well, the sad little amounts you must keep pinching off aren't even putting a dent in my account. You too good to use my money or something, kitten?"

Oh, of *course* Jack would point out that he had so much money that Rhys' small charges here and there went *completely* unnoticed because Jack's account was so goddamn fat with cash. Rhys rolled his eyes, which had gotten him a slap on the cheek with Jack's cock.

"You're the one who told me not to take advantage of it," Rhys had deadpanned, grunting when Jack smacked him with the appendage again just so he could laugh.

"I meant don't go buying a planet or some shit. You realize I'm the richest man in the universe, right? Your little peasant mentality probably couldn't even fathom buying something big enough that would piss me off. It's kinda cute, actually." Jack had grinned at him like the asshole he was and Rhys had bit the inside of his thigh in retaliation.

Of course Rhys had gone out that very day and bought the most ridiculous, obnoxious thing he could possibly think of. It was a car, for the record. A fancy, souped-up thing that had a lot of zeros on the tag. The best part was Rhys was never going to use it because he lived on a space station and cars weren't exactly a necessity, or even allowed on Helios of that matter. But, you know, in case he ever wanted to go gallivanting on Pandora at least he was going to do it in style. (He wouldn't go down to Pandora if his life depended on it, mostly because whatever was going to kill him on Helios to make him go down to Pandora was definitely less scary than the inevitable death of something much more scary on Pandora.)

Jack had thought the little act of defiance was funny and told Rhys '*that's the spirit!*' while he pressed the smaller man up against the giant window in his office and fucked him silly.

Right, that brings Rhys to the sex. *The fucking sex, man.* It was amazing and constant. Jack was... Well, to put it simply, fucking insatiable. The older man was always horny it seemed, ready to fuck at the drop of a hat. Rhys would be at work, minding his own business when Jack would send Meg down to discreetly (and awkwardly) escort him to his office. Sometimes, when Jack was feeling

particularly blissed-out after an orgasm, he'd let Rhys take a nap on the couch in his office instead of making him go back to work. Rhys loved those days, it almost made him feel like Jack cared, especially when he'd wake up with a blanket draped over him.

The only thing that peeved Rhys about the sex was that he was always in Jack's office. He was never invited up to his penthouse and Jack was pretty clear that he was never going to bother going to Rhys' 'shithole of an apartment.' He'd literally said that, without ever having seen Rhys' apartment. So after dinners or during work hours or whenever the hell else Jack wanted, it was always his office that they went back to.

Rhys supposed it was efficient. There was no way any of it could feel romantic and there was nowhere to cuddle. It made everything feel like... Well, like a business transaction. Even on nights when Jack would take him somewhere fancy and be all flirty and almost, *almost* sweet, Rhys was always snapped back to reality when they reached Jack's office and he was pushed up against the nearest hard surface.

It was for the best, really. Rhys didn't need to go getting attached to a man with a sexual history as big as Helios. But still, it was hard not to, even with the impersonal destination of Jack's office. Rhys was pretty sure he was reading into it all too much, but sometimes Jack's heterochromatic eyes looked at him with such a softness that Rhys didn't even think the man was capable of. Sometimes Jack's gentle touches would linger in non-sexual ways, like on his arm or at the small of his back and sometimes even on his neck or his cheek.

The best, or maybe it was the worst because it really messed with Rhys' emotions, was when the sex wasn't so primal and hungry. Don't get him wrong, he loved that sex, too. But sometimes Jack would lay him down on the couch in his office on his back and just fuck him slow. His usual dirty talk would be more praise than anything and he'd kiss Rhys so much that it made him breathless. He'd look at Rhys, *really* look at him while his hands roamed like they were trying to memorize the way Rhys felt beneath him.

Those were Rhys' favorite nights. Rhys could forget that they were in Jack's office because the only thing that mattered was that it was the two of them, so close and intimate. It was like they were the only two people in the universe. Rhys usually slept over on those rare, rare nights. It was uncomfortable as hell, Jack spooning him on a couch that was too small for two grown men. There was pretty much a guarantee that Rhys was going to wake up with a kink in his neck and a sore back but he didn't care, not when he had Jack's warmth wrapped around him and soft lips on his neck soothing him to sleep.

Vaughn and Yvette were more than suspicious. Rhys had stopped talking to Yvette about being a sugar baby considering he wasn't allowed on the website anymore and he definitely wasn't allowed to tell Yvette *why*. Vaughn always grilled him about where he disappeared to on the nights Jack let him stay, but Rhys was a master of deflection and maneuvered his way around the conversation until Vaughn forgot about his question. It was starting to get stressful, keeping his friends at bay and his lies in order. He felt horrible lying to them, but he was sure they'd understand if they knew it was lying or *dying*.

What really started to get hard about lying was when he had to start canceling plans or declining them altogether. It wasn't that he was choosing Jack over his friends (okay, maybe he was a little) but it was a lot safer to tell Vaughn and Yvette no then it was to tell Handsome Jack no.

The first time Jack had invited him to a trade dinner Rhys had almost passed out. Trade dinners were a *big* deal. He'd only ever heard rumors about them, and if the rumors were true then they were essentially huge parties thrown by different guns manufacturers to have pissing contests. Naturally,

Jack threw the most. And, even more naturally, Jack only ever attended the ones he threw.

So, yeah, Rhys was excited for a number of reasons. Jack had bought him a fancy suit to wear and even though Rhys thought the Hyperion yellow tie was disgusting he agreed to wear it because Jack met him halfway and got him a skinny tie, which Jack also thought was disgusting. He was also excited about going to one of Hyperion's biggest events with the most powerful man in the universe with unlimited opportunities to network and work on that promotion he was seeking. He was also giddy that Jack wanted to be seen with him *in public*. Rhys was going to be hanging off of him like some kind of arm candy and even though it was totally objectifying Rhys was into it.

Rhys was currently fixing his hair up in Jack's office bathroom, the same way he had the first time Jack took him out per Jack's request. He'd teased Jack about liking his hair that way and Jack's only answer was to push Rhys up against the shower wall and fuck him while the warm water steamed up the bathroom.

"You ready yet, kiddo? I wouldn't have told you to do your hair like that if I knew it was gonna take this frickin' long," Jack grumbled from where he'd appeared in the doorway, fingers idly adjusting his own tie.

Rhys turned the sink on to rinse the gel from his hands and he couldn't hide the blush on his cheeks when he finally glanced over at Jack. He'd never seen the man in a tie and suit jacket before, whenever Jack did dress up he always stuck with a dress shirt with an obscene amount of buttons pried open. But this, the whole get-up? It gave the CEO a certain sense of... Sophistication that made Rhys hot all over.

"Earth to Rhysie," Jack said while he waved a hand in Rhys' face, and when did he get so close? Jack was standing in front of him now, gently tugging at the hand towel Rhys had been using to dry his hands before he got distracted by Jack's presence. Jack put the towel down on the counter once he got it free from Rhys' tight grip on it.

"Stuff it, Jack," Rhys said with a glare, although Jack would call it a pout. "You can't put a time limit on perfection." Rhys gave Jack a ridiculous grin and batted his eyelashes dramatically. As he brushed past Jack to leave the bathroom he got a firm smack on the ass, making him jump and glare (pout) at Jack over his shoulder.

"Don't get too cocky now, princess. If anyone here is perfect, it's me, but you already knew that."

—

By the time they reached the large banquet hall the dinner was being held in they were an hour late. Why were they late? Not because of Rhys' hair, no, but because Jack had realized they were actually going to be on time and Jack didn't show up to things on time, apparently. So instead, he blew Rhys and fucked him with his fingers until Rhys was practically sobbing.

Jack wasn't a selfish lover per se, but Rhys was pretty sure the only reason he was the one who was on the receiving end was because Jack wanted him to be all flushed and disheveled when they showed up. Rhys had managed to fix his hair but his heart was still pounding and his cheeks certainly *felt* red.

The overall experience was completely overwhelming. Jack pranced around with his chest puffed out, talking to different executives and representatives with Rhys tagging along silently. Nobody really paid him any mind, more enraptured with all that was Handsome Jack and his irrefutable charm. Rhys was a little disappointed that he was being so blatantly ignored, any hopes of networking going right out the window, but he was also kind of relieved. He was... Really

intimidated by most of the people here, Jack's shadow the only thing keeping him from freaking out.

Rhys quickly learned that his job tonight was to fetch Jack drinks and provide laughter for Jack's jokes like he was a prompt board for a live TV audience. Jack wasn't even really paying him any mind, more caught up in his conversations than anything. If Jack did talk to him it was to briefly tell Rhys who someone was as they approached them before Jack started boasting about how great everything he ever did was. Total pissing contest.

It was one of the representatives from Jakobs that actually noticed Rhys' existence. She was an older woman, streaks of stark white striped through her dark hair that Rhys was *pretty* sure was dyed that way; no one greyed that elegantly. Except for Handsome Jack, of course, because Rhys had asked if the (very sexy) stripe of greying hair was natural to which Jack had looked at him like he was dumb and said, "Do you *really* think I'd die my hair, kiddo?" Rhys did not give the answer he was actually thinking.

Rhys gave the woman a kind smile when she made eye-contact with him and she returned it easy enough. Rhys learned her name was Hannah and that Jakobs wanted to propose a collaboration with Hyperion. Jack had laughed in her face and said he'd rather die than make guns with such a crude excuse for a gun company. To be fair, Jakobs guns were not on the level of Hyperion's. They were inaccurate and awful to look at and all they had to make up it was high fire rates. Definitely not worth Jack's time, not that he had to be such an ass about it.

"And who might you be, sweetheart?" Her attention was on Rhys now, her smile soft and welcoming and Rhys really wished Jack hadn't been such a dick to her.

"Uhh...", Rhys was at a loss for words for a second, not used to having someone actually talking to him, "My name is Rhys." He reached out to shake her hand, taking extra care to be gentle with his cybernetics.

"That's nice, dear, but *who* are you?"

Rhys flinched back a little at the question, his view of her shifting away from sweet old lady to off-putting just a hair.

"Um... I'm sorry, I don't think I understand."

"She means 'why the hell are you here,' pumpkin," Jack explained, clapping his free hand down on Rhys' shoulder, "he's my personal assistant."

The lie detector test determined that was a lie. Rhys glanced over at Jack out of the corner of his eye, not liking the lie he was just being forced into. What if she asked him questions? Also, why did it hurt Rhys' feelings so much to be brushed aside like that? (These two things were not related.) It's not like Jack could really give another answer... They weren't *dating*, by any means, so it's not like he could say Rhys was his boyfriend. Sugar baby was totally inappropriate and Jack clearly didn't want people knowing they were sexually involved (there goes Rhys' chance of asking if he could *finally* talk to his friends about this... Whatever this was). Rhys didn't *really* have a right to be upset, but still, he felt a twinge in his gut despite himself.

"Sure he is," this woman, *Hannah*, was still speaking in such a sickeningly sweet voice even though it was clear she was being condescending. She reached a hand up to pat Rhys' arm, getting all up in his personal space in a way that made Rhys' skin crawl. "Don't worry, he'll get tired of you soon enough."

Rhys watched her walk away, eyes blown wide with shock before they slowly narrowed with

malice. *Bitch*, Rhys thought, at the same time that Jack scoffed and muttered, “*bitch*,” under his breath. Rhys flinched when Jack squeezed his shoulder too hard. When Rhys looked at him he was downing the last of his whiskey (Rhys had almost lost his shit when he realized his assumptions were right) before he slammed the glass down on a nearby cocktail table. The look on his face was terrifying.

“I’m... Gonna go get a drink,” Rhys said quickly, only getting a grunt in response from the older man.

Rhys quickly made his way over to the bar and ordered himself something fruity with at least three types of liquor in it. When the glowing blue drink was handed to him he took a deep sip from the straw, taking one step away from the bar before he backtracked and order Jack a whiskey, just in case. He chewed at the straw in his drink nervously, mulling over the interaction he’d just been forced through. Why did it bother him so much that Jack lied? And how the hell did that woman see right through them so clearly? Was she a past lover of Jack’s? The thought made Rhys unnervingly jealous even though she was clearly too old to have ever been... Involved with Jack.

Rhys had to ask for a new straw when he was handed Jack’s whiskey, thanking the bartender before he scurried back into the crowd. Jack wasn’t where he’d left him, the only trace of him the abandoned whiskey glass he’d left behind. Rhys glanced around the large crowd, unsure of how he could possibly find the man through this many people.

“Shit,” Rhys cursed, placing the two drinks down at the same cocktail table that Jack’s empty whiskey glass was on. “Fuckin’ asshole.”

“That’s quite the mouth you’ve got on you.”

Rhys jumped, whirling around at the voice behind him. He blinked stupidly at the man, mouth slightly agape in shock. The man just chuckled and took a step forward, standing to Rhys’ left with one elbow propped up on the cocktail table. He reached his other arm out and Rhys looked down at the waiting hand, mouth snapping shut as he reached out to accept the handshake.

“Julian Summers, and you are?”

Rhys felt bitterness bubble up in his chest, eyes narrowing to a glare. “Handsome Jack’s personal assistant,” he answered, because these people clearly only cared about what you did for a living. Rhys totally wasn’t being spiteful, nope.

The man laughed again, making Rhys relax a little. “I meant your name, surely you have one of those?”

Julian was... Well, he was pretty handsome. Definitely quite a few years older than Rhys but clearly Rhys was into the whole age difference thing. He was a little shorter than Rhys but stockier, a nicely trimmed beard and slicked back hair that was too curly to really be tamed by the gel in it.

“Sorry, sorry,” Rhys gave a little laugh, “Rhys Strongfork, it’s a pleasure.” He gave Julian a flirty smile because Rhys was a petty bitch and if Jack wasn’t going to give him the time of day then he was going to let this guy do it.

They talked for a while, actually. Julian was charming, but not in the same way Jack was. Jack was all confidence and power, whereas Julian was sweet and soothing. He actually seemed to give a shit about Rhys was saying, their conversation flowing easily and comfortably. They shared a lot of laughs and even though Rhys wasn’t really into the soft touches the man was prodding him with Rhys just went along with it. They were in a crowded place, after all, and Julian didn’t exactly seem



harmful.

Rhys sucked the last of his drink out of his straw and gave a half-hearted glance around the room, sighing when he didn't spot Jack. He returned his attention back to Julian, who was finishing off the glass of whiskey Rhys had offered him since Jack was nowhere to be found anyway.

"I'll go get us some drinks," Julian offered with a smile, and Rhys nodded as the man took his empty glass and headed back to the bar.

While Rhys waited he pulled his palm-comp up, scrolling through his contacts until he came across Jack's. Of course, it didn't say anything that gave away it was the CEO's, lest his friends or any prying eyes catch a glimpse at the holo-screen. He contemplated calling the man but quickly decided against it as Jack's colorful threat danced across his mind. Rhys glanced up over the screen as he saw Julian approaching, quickly closing the program and bringing his hand back down at his side. He accepted the new drink with a smile and clinked his glass with Julian's.

A few more sips into his drink and a little further into their conversation and Rhys was starting to feel lightheaded. Weird, he was a lightweight, sure, but not a drink and a few sips kind of lightweight. He shook his head a little in an attempt to push the fuzzy feeling away. He glanced at Julian, trying to focus on his words. Why did he sound so far away?

"Rhys?" Julian said with concern, obviously noticing his altered state. "Rhys, are you all right?"

Rhys blinked rapidly at the man, trying to force away the blurriness at the edges of his vision. What the hell was going on? "I'm... I'm all right, I think I might have had... Too much to drink," Rhys' voice was tapering off the more he spoke until it was at a quiet whisper.

"You were fine just a second ago... Surely you're not that much of a lightweight?" Julian chuckled, clearly trying to lighten the mood. Rhys gave a weak chuckle back.

"It's... I'm..." Rhys gripped the edge of the cocktail table as a wave of dizziness crashed over him. Okay, this wasn't normal, he needed to find Jack and get the hell out of here. He felt Julian's hand at his elbow, steadying him, but Rhys shook it off and brought his flesh hand up to hold the side of his head. "Where's... Jack...?"

Rhys' knees suddenly gave out but Julian caught him, holding the lanky man against his body to keep him upright. Rhys was trying to blink away the cloud that was fogging up his vision, his mind. He felt helpless and scared, trembling against Julian's chest. Rhys cringed as he felt Julian's lips at his ear, hushing him quietly.

"Jack can't help you, sweetheart," Julian murmured in his ear.

Even though Rhys felt like he was losing control of himself, his senses dwindling, everything in his body was screaming, *'no! Wrong! Get away!'* He tried pushing at Julian's chest but his trembling arms did nothing against the other man's strength. His body was getting heavier by the second and his tongue felt like it was made of lead.

"N-No... L-Let me...", the words were gone, body fully succumbing to Julian's will. The man started to maneuver him before they were moving, Rhys' body held up entirely by the arm around his waist and the hand at his wrist. Rhys vaguely registered that his arm must have been slung around the man's shoulders as if he were just a drunk partygoer being kindly escorted out by a friend.

Rhys wanted to scream, for help, for *Jack*, but all he could muster was quiet, unintelligible whimpers.

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Jack tried to wait for the kid, he did, but there was a fanboy yapping in his ear excitedly and a very pretty Maliwan representative giving him ‘do-me’ eyes across the room. Jack was quickly losing what little patience he had left. He turned to the rambling man beside him sharply, his face twisting into a crazed snarl. The man quickly snapped his mouth shut, but Jack shot his hand forward to curl into the front of his shirt anyway.

“Listen here, *Justin*,” Jack growled, face close to the now-trembling man.

“J-Julian, sir.”

“Really? Are you fucking *stupid*?” Jack shook the man with a violent jerk of his arm. “If you say one more *goddamn word to me*, I will personally shove my thumbs into your eyeballs until they pop like thresher eggs, *got it*?” Jack was talking through clenched teeth by the time he was done speaking, shoving the man against one of the cocktail tables so hard it almost toppled over. Julian nodded mutely, much to Jack’s pleasure.

Jack jabbed a finger in the direction of the bar, namely at Rhys, who had his back to them. “You see that twinkie little ass over there?” He waited for Julian to look at Rhys, then back at Jack with another silent nod. “Be a good boy and let him know I’ll be talking to Maliwan,” Jack jabbed a thumb over his shoulder so the man knew exactly where he was going to be. Jack didn’t wait for confirmation this time, just turned and headed towards the scarlet dress that was beckoning him to push his hands up under it until it was hiked up around her hips.

Sadly, when he got there, it was all just a ruse. He got wrapped up in some bullshit business talk that he really didn’t care about. He spent most of the conversation glaring at the girl- she was only a freakin’ *intern*- until she looked like she was going to piss herself. Once she’d scurried away in fear he brought his attention to Katagawa Jr., though he didn’t listen to a damn word the brat was saying. He *really* hated the Maliwan CEO, pompous little bitch was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, didn’t know how to run a company for shit.

“Oh thank fuck,” Jack said rather loudly when his ECHOcomm watch started ringing, completely cutting Katagawa off mid-sentence. “I gotta take this, sugar tits. I’m sure you understand.” Jack winked at the gaping man before he took a few steps away from the group and brought his wrist up.

Jack glared at the contact displayed on his screen. Didn’t he *explicitly* tell Rhys never to call him? He was too important to be answering calls just because the scrawny idiot got lost in a crowd of people. But, the kid did get him out of a boring conversation he didn’t want to be a part of, he could at least answer.

“You got lost, kiddo? Need daddy to come find you?” Jack let out bark of laughter at his own joke. “You at the lost and found booth?”

Once the video feed finally loaded and brought his holo-screen up Jack raised a curious eyebrow. Everything was upside down and jostling awkwardly. It almost looked like Rhys was using his ECHOeye for the feed instead of his palm-comp.

“Uhh, why ya upside down, Rhysie?”

The only response he got was a jumbled murmur that didn’t even resemble words. Okay, now he was starting to get worried. Wait, whoa, whoa, not worried. Where the hell did that thought come from? Jack could care less about the snarky little shit. If anything, he’d be more concerned with the hassle of having to find another young piece of ass hanging off of his dick. Definitely not worried,

just... Confused.

“Hey, kid, I have no idea what you’re saying, you’re gonna have to speak up,” Jack deadpanned, grunting when all he got was another series of grumbles he couldn’t understand.

“I am *this close*,” Jack brought his free hand up to pinch thumb and forefinger together so there was hardly any space between them, “to losing my shit, what the fuck—.” He stopped talking as he heard a voice in the background.

“*Would you shut the hell up?*”

And then it looked like Rhys was shaking, or rather, someone was shaking him. Jack caught a glimpse of legs, still upside-down, as if Rhys was... Hanging over somebody’s shoulder? That would explain why everything was upside down. Did someone... Was someone *taking* Rhys? Jack suddenly stiffened, ignoring the way his stomach dropped because he definitely wasn’t worried at all. His face tightened into something more serious but definitely still laced with anger, although the anger was no longer directed at Rhys.

“Baby, baby listen to me,” Jack said with such a softness that he didn’t even recognize his own voice, “where are you? Can you tell me where you are?”

Jack felt his chest tighten when Rhys let out what sounded like a pained whimper, and then the video was a rapid blur before he was looking at... The floor? No, that was definitely a ceiling. The sound of springs creaking had Jack realizing Rhys was thrown onto a bed, and Jack hadn’t even realized he was walking until he was suddenly standing outside of the banquet hall. He moved far enough away that he couldn’t hear the noise of the party, straining his ears to see if he could hear anything coming from the call that could help him figure out where Rhys was.

“*I’ll be back for you, whore.*”

Jack felt a surge of anger rush through his veins that had him seeing red, hand clenched so tightly into fists that his knuckles were turning white. He tried to tell himself he was angry because he definitely recognized that voice, he just couldn’t place it, and not because someone was insulting what was *his*.

There was some rustling on the other end and the video feed was moving around just slightly. Rhys must have been trying to move. Judging by the way Rhys whimpered in defeat and stopped moving he must have been paralyzed to some capacity. *Drugged*, Jack thought angrily, hands trembling now with rage.

“Okay, you can’t talk, right? He gave you something, didn’t he?” Jack took the long whine from the other end as a yes. He tried to think of a way that Rhys could communicate where he was without having to talk. Jack was starting to panic, he could feel it in his chest, the tightness there making his breaths puff out in quick increments. *Calm down, this isn’t helping*, Jack thought, taking a few deep, steadying breaths. God, he couldn’t remember the last time he’d felt this... *Concerned* for someone else’s safety. He didn’t like it.

“Ping me,” Jack said suddenly as the idea came to him, “ping me your location, pumpkin. Can you do that?” The tension in his muscles coiled tighter as the silence stretched on, not even receiving an ambiguous noise from the other end of the call. Then, slowly, the video feed moved in what looked like Rhys was trying to nod. The video feed was fading to darkness, like Rhys was blinking. Jack waited anxiously, murmuring a soft, “*come on, come on,*” as he waited for the blink of Rhys’ ECHOeye to activate the ping.

But the feed remained black.

## Chapter End Notes

I may leave you guys on this cliff hanger until I get back, we'll see...

Also omg I know Jack's worried about Rhys this is craaaaaazy.

## Chapter 9

### Chapter Summary

Jack does what he does best: plays the hero.

### Chapter Notes

Okay guys, I couldn't help myself. I didn't want to leave you waiting a whole week for a conclusion to this crazy ride. I hope you all enjoy and I'll see ya in a week!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Jack stared at the black holo-screen in horror. What just happened? Why did the video cut out? How was he supposed to find Rhys *now*? He hated this, hated feeling so powerless and on-edge. He should just walk away, accept that there was nothing he could do and forget about Rhys like he'd been trying to do since the beginning. But... He couldn't, he need to *do something*.

"Rhys? Rhys, are you there?" The call hadn't ended yet, so at least that was a good sign. Maybe Rhys could still hear him, maybe he just passed out for a second. "Hey, kid, wake up!"

There was some noise on the other end but it sounded far away, like something was happening *around* Rhys. Jack let out a frustrated shout and kicked a garbage can so hard it went flying until it hit another garbage can fifty feet away from him, the impact causing the top of the first garbage can to pop off. Garbage flew everywhere like a trash grenade, and there was humor there somewhere but Jack couldn't find it.

"Eradicate all germs!" Came a robotic voice to his left, a little cleaning robot emerging from a hatch that opened in the wall. He kicked that too, the robotic voice screaming in horror before it connected with the wall it had come from and most definitely broke.

"Motherfucker!" Jack shouted, looking back to the still-blank screen. He had his free hand fisted in his hair now, pulling at the strands tightly. *Why is this happening, why is this happening, why is this happening* echoed through his head like a mantra.

A loud '*ping*' echoed through the empty corridor and Jack jumped in surprise, the video display on his holo-screen changing into a 3D map of Helios. A little red dot blinked in the residential sector and a similar yellow dot blinked to signify where Jack was. Jesus, how long had he been talking to Katagawa? Rhys was practically on the other side of Helios.

"You did it, kiddo!" Jack shouted, not even sure if Rhys could still hear him. He took off into a sprint, keeping the audio of his call with Rhys on with the map of Helios still projecting. Without stopping he pulled off his suit jacket and ripped his tie off, discarding them both carelessly. He *really* wished he wasn't wearing such constricting clothes but he had no time to think about that.

Once he reached the general area of where Rhys was supposed to be he slowed down, observing the different apartment complexes around him. It was more crowded in this area, people walking around

and sitting on benches. He was getting a lot of odd, frightened stares as people started to notice him, wondering why Handsome Jack would be in such a trivial area of Helios looking like a crazed animal.

Jack hardly noticed, though, too close to finding Rhys to care about anything else. He was getting anxious again, worried about being too late or wondering what that prick was planning on doing with *his*— Fuck, was he attached? No, absolutely not, that was impossible. He shook the thought from his head and looked around him, reaching out to grab the closest person to him by their sleeve.

The woman screamed like she was being murdered, and Jack would have said something about that if he didn't have more pressing matters to attend to. He shoved the map of Helios in her face, shaking her violently.

“Shut up, you stupid bitch!” Jack shouted in her face, pleased that she listened. “Where is this? Huh? Tell me where the *fuck* this is!”

A trembling hand reached up and pointed at one of the complexes, and even though she wasn't screaming anymore she wouldn't stop whimpering. Jack growled and shoved her onto the ground, stepping over her like she was nothing more than a nuisance in his way. He pulled his keycard from his pocket as he approached the door, striding in when it buzzed open. One of the perks of owning a damn space station was having a card that opened every door on it.

Jack bounded up the stairs, stopping at every door to listen and call out Rhys' name before he used his keycard to kick the door open. The apartments were small, studios, and most of them were empty save for the few people he'd scared shitless kicking their doors open. He'd gone three floors up before he finally came to a door where he could hear soft whimpering and the rustling of fabric when he pressed his hear up to it. He looked down at his watch and realized the sounds were coming from the device as well, his heartbeat accelerating with fury.

With a quick swipe of his card and a kick to the door so loud that it echoed through the entire complex, Jack was charging into the apartment like a bull on parade. There was Rhys, whimpering, *trembling* on the bed, his arms weakly trying to push the larger man on top of him off. He was shirtless but otherwise clothed, *thank god*, and his eyes were glistening with unshed tears when he jumped from the sound of the door banging open and looked over at Jack.

The fear Jack saw in those wide, mismatched eyes lit something inside Jack that made him want to *protect*. He wanted to pull Rhys into his arms and cradle him, tell him everything was okay and that Jack wasn't going to let anything happen to him. He shoved those feelings down and focused on his rage, hardening his gaze as he looked to the shocked man who had his hands on what was not his to touch.

“*You*,” Jack seethed, finally registering who the man was. That fanboy from the party that Jack had carelessly shoved away and then... And then led Rhys right into his *fucking arms*. Fuck, this was his fault, wasn't it? Typical.

Jack raced forward and before Julian could even bring his arms up to stop the assault Jack was punching him square in the jaw. The man sputtered and fell off the bed, scrambling to try and get himself on his feet. Jack didn't give him the chance, kicking the man in the chest so hard that he slammed back down onto the ground with a pained shout. Jack was on him in an instant, straddling his chest as he wailed punch after punch after *punch* into Julian's face.

The blood that was spewing from the man beneath him was obscene. His knuckles were coated in the thick crimson as he alternated between throttling each side of the man's face. It was starting to splatted up onto Jack's forearms, delicate flecks panting his neck and the mask on his face. It seemed

like it was coming from everywhere; his nose, his mouth, cuts on his lips, brow, cheeks. It was so much *blood* and Jack fucking *loved it*.

Even though the anger was still very much there he was starting to have *fun*, beating this guy to a pulp. His face was practically unrecognizable now, eyes swollen, nose bent at a strange angle. The sounds that were filling the room were wet from the blood, from the gargled pleas of the man below him. Sickening crunches and cracks echoed, no doubt from broken cartilage and bone. Jack's face had twisted into a psychotic, gleeful grin. Was he laughing? He might have been laughing.

When Jack finally stopped punching and started wrapping his hands around Julian's throat he was panting, chest heaving from the exertion. He leaned down close to the bloodied face, or at least what used to be a face, his grin splitting wider across his face.

"Beg for your life, go ahead, I know you want to," Jack teased, only to squeeze down tighter on the man's windpipe when he started making noise.

"Do you know what happens when you touch what's mine?" Jack's voice was barely above a whisper now, so calm and steady it was frightening. Julian's hands came up to claw at Jack's wrists, trying to pry the suffocating vice from this throat. Jack just chuckled at the attempt, shaking the man a little for emphasis.

"Well? *Do you?*" Jack squeezed tighter, feeling the man's windpipe starting to give under his grip. Then, with a repulsive cracking sound, Jack strangled the life out of him. The hands at his wrists went limp, the familiar sound of a death rattle wheezing out of Julian's chest. Jack held his grip around Julian's throat a while longer just to be sure, his psychotic grin falling into a flat, bored look.

"I think you do," he said matter-of-factly before he let the limp body go. He ran a hand through his hair with a heavy sigh, smearing blood into the strands.

Jack stood from where he'd been straddling the man, grunting as his knees popped. He turned his head from side to side with a hand on his chin, cracking his neck like he'd just taken part in a particularly tough workout rather than a murder. He turned his attention to Rhys, who had his back flush against the headboard, eyes wide as he clutched a pillow to his chest. Well, at least the drugs were wearing off, it seemed like he had better control over his body now. His entire body was quivering, and when Jack met his gaze he seemed to cower even further.

Was Rhys... Scared of *him*? Jack suddenly felt guilt hit him like a brick wall, eyes going wide as he realized yes, Rhys was fucking *terrified* of him. And it wasn't the same kind of terror he'd expressed in the conference room when they'd first met, no, it was nothing like that. It was genuine fear, like Jack was going to turn on him and beat him to death, too. It was like Rhys didn't even recognize him...

"Rhysie...", Jack murmured, taking a step closer to the bed, but Rhys pushed himself farther away, or at least tried to with the headboard already up against his back.

"Stay— stay away from me!" Rhys' voice was broken and still a little slurred from the drugs. Maybe he *didn't* recognize him with whatever the hell was in his system.

"Hey, hey," Jack whispered, trying to remember how to smile softly and hoping he succeeded, "I'm not going to hurt you, never you." Jack put his hands up in surrender, although the blood that was caked up to his wrists probably didn't help make him look less menacing. What the hell was that shit about *'never you'*?

"But you— But— But—," Rhys could hardly speak and his eyes were starting to look glossed over,

his breathing so quick he was near hyperventilation. It was becoming pretty clear to Jack that the only reason Rhys was talking or moving was the sheer will of the adrenaline running through his system. Once that died down the effects of the drugs were definitely going to take over again. All Jack needed to do was calm him down and hopefully he'd just pass out and Jack could take him somewhere safe.

"Shh, shh," Jack hushed him as he took a few more steps closer. Rhys didn't try to get away this time, though his eyes were wide as they tried to focus on Jack, make sure he wasn't going to hurt him. "It's okay, see?" Jack reached a hand out to cup Rhys' cheek, frowning as he smeared blood on the pale skin. But Rhys didn't shy away, and once he recognized the touch as gentle he actually leaned into it, nuzzling into the caress.

"There you go, baby. Jack's got you." Jack used his free hand to gently pull the pillow from Rhys' grip, unable to help the smile on his face when Rhys instead replaced the pillow with Jack's study form. Jack wrapped his arms around the younger man, holding him silently as he stroked his back and his hair. Rhys tried to peer over Jack's shoulder at the dead body on the floor, but Jack grabbed his chin and turned his head into his chest. "You don't wanna see that, kiddo."

Eventually Rhys' breathing evened out and his body went lax against Jack's. He shifted his hold on the slender form until he was carrying Rhys with an arm hooked under his knees and the other wrapped around his shoulders.

—

The first thing Rhys noticed when he woke up was *oh my god silk sheets*. He practically purred as he rolled onto his stomach and buried his face into a very plush, very comfortable pillow. And then the blurry-edged memories came rushing back to him. Rhys bolted up-right on the bed, sitting on his knees facing the headboard. Where was he? Fuck, fuck, fuck, where the hell *was he*? He looked around the room in a panic, wincing as his head started to throb and his joints started to ache.

"Think, Rhys, think," he murmured, closing his eyes as he tried to get a sense of a timeline for the memories rushing back to him. He met Julian... Who definitely drugged him... And brought him somewhere... He glanced around the room, nothing about the large, grandiose room looking anything like the one he remembers. So Julian didn't bring him here... Then who did?

He remembered *Jack*, and the scent of the room started to feel familiar. The smell and the memory of Jack made him feel warm and safe, the familiar musk that Rhys *still* wasn't sure was natural or cologne filling his lungs. He sunk back down into the bed, tugging the softest comforter he'd ever felt tighter around his body.

Rhys let himself daydream about Jack a little bit as he looked down at himself. He was wearing clothes, that was good, but not the clothes he had been wearing. Actually, none of the clothes he was wearing were even his. The shirt was way too big, falling off of one shoulder, the fabric soft and thin from being washed too many times. The sweatpants on his hips were pulled so tight to get them to stay up that the waistband was wrinkled and folding in on itself in places. Were these... Jack's clothes? He blushed at the thought.

The warmth surrounding the thought of Jack dressing him in his clothes started to fade, however, as more memories rattled around in his brain. Jack beat the shit out of Julian, beat him and then *strangled him to death*. A shiver ran up Rhys' spine and his stomach lurched, remembering all the blood on Jack's hands and face and neck. But despite the disgust he felt at the idea of being in the same room as a dead body he felt... Happy? No, happy wasn't the word. It was more like infatuation, for Jack, and for the idea of Jack killing someone *for him*.



“Wow, that’s pretty fucked up, dude,” Rhys murmured to himself, rubbing his hands across his face. The faint smell of soap wafted into his nose at the touch, and he sniffed up his flesh arm until he came to the conclusion that Jack must have bathed him somehow. That made him even giddier.

Rhys jumped as he heard the distinct sound of a shower being shut off, and how did he not notice it had been on in the first place? He glanced to the door that he assumed was the bathroom judging by where the sound had come from, anxiously awaiting what he hoped was a blood-free Jack.

When Jack emerged with just a towel slung around his hips, skin damp and hair slicked back and heavy with water Rhys sat up a little bit in the bed. He propped himself up on one elbow, lips parting just slightly as Jack’s gaze fell on him. Neither man said anything as Jack approached the bed, Rhys too awe-struck by the gravity of Jack’s presence.

Once Jack was almost at the bed Rhys pushed himself up further, moving to sit on the edge of his bed, legs parted so Jack had somewhere to go. And Jack slotted himself there, between Rhys’ legs, Rhys gazing up at him with what was no doubt an embarrassing twinkle in his eyes. Rhys’ wide eyes fluttered to half-mast as Jack cupped his cheeks with both hands, tilting Rhys’ head up just a little more so when Jack leaned down their lips fit together perfectly, Jack’s head tilted slightly to one side as Rhys arched up into him.

Rhys’ hands came up to rest on Jack’s sculpted abs, fingertips tracing the muscles there like he loved to do so much. Jack’s hands moved into his hair, one hand curling into the locks gently while the other cupped the back of his neck. It was perfect, so perfect. Jack had never kissed him quite like *this*, so tender and almost... *Don’t get ahead of yourself, Rhys*, he scolded himself, instead focusing on the feel of Jack’s skin beneath his hands as they traveled up to his chest.

Jack hummed in appreciation of the touch before Rhys felt his tongue skirting over his bottom lip, and Rhys wasted no time letting him in. Rhys moaned as their tongues met and then Jack was over him, pushing him down into the bed until Rhys was on his back with Jack above him, the towel around his hips falling open and sliding to the bedroom floor. Rhys scooted back on the bed so Jack didn’t have to half-stand half-hover over him, Jack crawling after him until they were both fully situated.

Jack nudged at Rhys’ thigh with a knee and Rhys complied, parting his legs so Jack could settle between them. Jack’s lips moved to his neck, kissing and sucking and biting until Rhys was writhing beneath him, back arching as he tried to get closer to the older man. Rhys could already feel a mark blossoming on his neck, the skin tender as Jack gave a fleeting bite before he was moving down to Rhys’ collarbone.

Rhys let out a soft gasp as Jack’s hands moved beneath his shirt, the fingers at his sides making him squirm as he tried not to giggle. Rhys was ticklish but Jack was always so rough with him that his touches were never light enough to make Rhys break out into a fit of giggles. But this new soft-handed, gently-caressing Jack? Yeah, Rhys was on the verge of laughter and Jack knew it, the bastard. The lips at his collarbone curved into a smile and the fingers at his sides were deliberately prodding now.

“You ticklish, baby?” Jack murmured against his skin.

“N-No!” Rhys tried to sound serious, he really did, but his voice cracked and kicked up an octave as Jack hit a particularly ticklish spot down by his hip.

“I think you’re lying,” Jack said in a sing-song voice, his fingers moving rapidly now in that tickle-tickle way and Rhys couldn’t hold it back anymore. He started squirming harder and was in all-out laughter now, his hands trying to pull Jack’s away from his body. He might as well not have even

tried since Jack was so much stronger than him and didn't even budge.

"Stop! J-Jack— Jack stop!" Rhys shouted through his laughter, looking up at Jack as he rocked back to sit on his haunches so he could see Rhys' face, all bright and happy. Rhys had tears at the corners of his eyes from laughing so hard, his belly aching from the onslaught.

"What's the magic word? Hmm, pumpkin?" Jack was grinning in that way where his eyes creased at the corners, that kind of true happiness Rhys rarely got to see. If he wasn't laughing so damn hard he might have tried to cherish the sight.

"Please! Please, please, please!" Rhys said each plea in quick succession, gasping for air when Jack finally relented. He didn't have much time to recover though, Jack leaning back over him in an instant and catching his lips. They were both smiling against each other so the kiss was a little sloppy, but Rhys relished in it, relished in the happiness he felt and the way Jack seemed to be mirroring that right back to him.

Once their smiles finally died down Rhys had his hands in Jack's hair, tangling his fingers in the damp locks so he could pull him closer and kiss him harder. Jack worked at pulling his sweatpants down, Rhys bringing his knees up to Jack could push them off his feet and off the bed without having to break their kiss. Rhys whimpered when Jack did break their kiss so he could rip the too-large shirt over Rhys' head and toss it across the room. The action was hurried, even frantic, but not rough or harsh like Jack was prone to be. He was still gentle when he moved back into Rhys, the younger man tilting his head to the side so Jack could work another mark into his skin on the other side of his neck.

Rhys reached between them with his flesh hand to grab Jack's cock, surprised to find it fully hard already. He gave it a long stroke and Jack groaned against his neck, hips bucking into the touch. Rhys didn't get much time to play, Jack kissing and licking his way down Rhys' body and out of reach. Rhys arched up into it all, whimpering when Jack took a little extra time to suck and bite at his nipples.

Jack took a moment to suck another mark onto Rhys' hip, sending tingling goosebumps all up the right side of his body. The older man licked a stripe up the length of Rhys' hard cock, and Rhys arched up with a soft, breathy moan that had Jack growling as he looked up at Rhys from beneath his lashes. Rhys gave him a blushing, shy smile but then something shifted in Jack's gaze that Rhys couldn't quite make out. Even though Rhys couldn't quite understand it he wanted to see more of it, something swirling around in those heterochromatic eyes making Rhys feel warm and fuzzy inside.

Rhys squeaked as Jack suddenly dragged him to the edge of the bed by his thighs and dropped to his knees, nipping at the soft skin between thigh and butt. Jack's hands slid up the back of his thighs, spreading them open wide before they grabbed his ass. Thumbs pulled him apart and Rhys felt *exposed* with Jack so close to his entrance, close enough that Rhys could feel his hot breath against his skin.

"Mmh— *Jack*," Rhys whispered as a warm tongue licked at the tight ring of muscle once, twice, *three* times and Rhys' thighs were already trembling. He quickly grabbed his legs by hooking his hands under his knees, which also effectively spread him wider much to Jack's pleased hum.

Jack knew what to do with his mouth, that was for sure. He poked and prodded, teasing Rhys with the tip of his tongue until the younger man was whimpering. Occasionally he'd move up to nip at the skin between his balls and his hole, which had Rhys writhing on the bed with each pass of teeth. Jack's nose would brush and nudge up against his balls every now and then in a way that Rhys could tell was on purpose, the sensitive skin tightening closer to his body before relaxing again.

Rhys let go of one of his legs to fist his flesh hand into Jack's hair, thighs clamping down around his forearm as Jack really started to tongue-fuck him. He was gasping on each breath, soft whines and moans escaping his lips. He felt so close even though he knew there was no way he was going to come like this, Jack's tongue working him open until he couldn't see straight.

Rhys gave a particularly hard tug at Jack's hair that had the man pulling away, and Rhys blushed as he sheepishly parted his thighs so he could look down at the older man. Jack looked just as blissed-out as Rhys somehow, eyes half-lidded and lips parted with puffs of breath. Rhys swore Jack was blushing under that mask, he had to be.

Jack placed a tender kiss to the back of his thigh, for once actually listening to one of Rhys' silent pleas without forcing him to say it out loud. Jack stood and Rhys couldn't stop his eyes from dragging down that chiseled body all the way to the big cock between his legs. Jack was definitely the epitome of big dick energy.

"Up by the headboard." Jack's voice snapped him out of his cock-loving trance, eyes snapping back up to look the man in the eye.

Rhys rolled so he could crawl up to the pillows, arching his spine down so his face was buried in them, ass up in the air. He wasn't like that for long though, the bed dipping with Jack's weight before a strong hand came to his hip and pushed him over so he was laying on his back again. Rhys parted his legs without preamble, eyes tracing the strong, defined bicep as Jack reached into the bedside table to pull out a bottle of lube. Then Jack was slotted between his legs again, pouring lube onto his hand before stroking his big cock with a pleased moan.

Rhys watched silently, unable to choose between watching the slick glide of Jack's hand or the pleased look on that handsome face. His gaze flickered between both, and Jack was watching him, too, eyes intense in Rhys' blushing face. Rhys loved the way Jack's eyebrows knit together when Rhys reached forward and took over, his mouth falling open with a pant as Rhys picked up a slow, even rhythm.

"Fuck, baby," Jack murmured, his lube-slick hand pressing a thumb into Rhys' pink hole. Rhys spread his legs wider with a moan, hand squeezing higher reflexively around Jack's dick at the pleasurable intrusion. Jack bucked his hips into the tight squeeze with a hiss, curling his thumb into the spot he knew Rhys loved so much.

Rhys arched his back and pushed his head back into the pillows when Jack pushed against his prostate. His hand jerked backward and off Jack's dick with a wet '*pop*,' and that seemed invitation enough for Jack because his thumb was pulled free and he was looming over Rhys while he grabbed his own cock and guided it to Rhys' hole.

Before Jack did anything he propped himself up with his forearm beside Rhys' head and leaned in until their foreheads were pressed together. Rhys got butterflies, his breath catching in his throat as he met Jack's gaze. This was all so... Intimate. Even on those nights in Jack's office on the couch he wasn't *this* intimate. What was going on? Rhys felt dizzy with joy, suddenly spiraling himself into a world where him and Jack were more than just sugar daddy and sugar baby. Was that where this was going? It sure as hell felt like it and Rhys really, *really* wanted it to be true.

Rhys' eyes fluttered closed as Jack started pushing in and Rhys brought his legs up to wrap around his waist. His arms came up to encircle Jack's neck, one hand curling into now-almost-dry hair, the other pressing flat against his back between his shoulder blades. Rhys let out a little gasp as Jack's hips slotted against his, buried to the hilt.

"Baby, look at me," Jack whispered, his breath ghosting over Rhys' lips. Rhys blinked his eyes open

and he swore he could have cried at all of the emotion he saw there. It was a jumbled mess, anger, jealousy, fear, like Jack was trying to tell him *'I was worried about you'* with his eyes alone. Or maybe that was wishful thinking on Rhys' part, but he was allowed to dream. And then it was like something clicked into place and all Rhys could see was affection, Jack's face almost looking completely different with such an emotion painted across it.

"I— *hah*," Rhys was cut off by a breathy moan as Jack pulled out and slowly thrust back in. *Thank god*, Rhys thought, *almost embarrassed myself*.

Jack's hips never took on that feverish, frantic pace he usually assumed. It was all just a slow, smooth rock of his hips that had both men panting and moaning for one another. Jack had one hand at Rhys' thigh, caressing the soft skin there while his other hand toyed with Rhys' hair. The only sounds in the room was their open-mouthed gasps and breathy whines for each other. Rhys felt like he could go on like this forever, rutting against each other in the dim light on Jack's amazing bed, holding each other so close.

Rhys' whole body arched as Jack picked up the pace a little and shifted his hips, each thrust now pressing into Rhys' prostate. Jack buried his face into Rhys' neck with a pleased groan as Rhys tightened around him from the pleasure, Jack's hips stuttering for a moment before he forced himself back into a rhythm.

"Jack, *Jack* that feels *so good*," Rhys whispered against Jack's ear, letting out a surprised moan as Jack drove a harder thrust into him just to prove how good it felt. Each thrust was working a whimper out of Rhys now, that familiar pressure building up.

"You like when I make you feel good?" Jack whispered right back, smiling at the quick nod and whimpered "yes" he received. "I like making you feel good, baby."

That had Rhys keening, the hand in Jack's hair moving to his cheek so he could pull the man out of the crook of his neck and kiss him. They had to break every few seconds to catch their breath, smiling at each other between kisses or nipping at the other's face somewhere.

Somehow Jack kept the pace even and calm, even as he started to buck into Rhys faster. There was no slapping of skin, just the smooth glide of Jack's cock in and out and in and out. Rhys didn't even think Jack was capable of sweet, vanilla sex, not with how he usually tore through Rhys like a wild animal. Jack was so aggressive in day-to-day life, his emotions so erratic and unpredictable and *violent* that it only made sense sex with him would be the same way. For fuck's sake the man had beaten and strangled a man to death only a few hours ago (well, Rhys assumed it was a few hours ago, he didn't really know) and here he was holding Rhys like he was the most precious, breakable thing in the universe.

"I-I'm— oh!" A particularly deep thrust had Rhys stopping short, and then each thrust after was like that, that extra little inch or so turning Rhys' brain to mush. He tried to gather his thoughts again, thighs squeezing tighter around Jack's waist. Jack brought his forehead down against Rhys' again and Rhys stared up into those heterochromatic eyes as they shared breath. "Jack, I'm so— close," Rhys choked out, eyebrows knitting together with pleasure.

Without hesitation Jack let go of Rhys' thigh and wrapped his hand around the weeping cock between them. Rhys bucked up into Jack's hand, letting out a long, broken whine as his orgasm rolled through him like waves against a beach. Jack wasn't far behind, his hips stuttering before he stilled, hips flush together as he emptied inside of the younger man.

They clutched at each other in the afterglow, Jack's arms entwining around Rhys' shoulders and lower back while Rhys stayed tangled around Jack with arms and legs. Their foreheads were still

pressed together but their eyes were closed, breath mingling together between them as they tried to catch it. Once their heartbeats calmed and they both felt less lightheaded Jack pulled away, both men hissing as Jack's softening cock slipped out.

Jack leaned over the side of the bed to grab the towel he had used when he got out of the shower. He cleaned Rhys up first, then himself before he somehow elegantly flopped down onto the bed beside Rhys. They both stared up at the ceiling for a while, but Rhys was the one to make the first move. He rolled onto his side so he could cuddle himself up under Jack's arm and lay his head on his chest. When he glanced up at the older man his eyes were closed, one hand under his head while the arm that Rhys had wiggled himself under curled around him to pull Rhys more snug against Jack's side.

Rhys couldn't stop the smile that spread onto his face. He swung a leg over to curl it around one of Jack's, tucking his heel under Jack's calf with a quiet hum. His cybernetic arm lay stretched out across Jack's chest, fingers cupped gently over the shoulder opposite Rhys.

Rhys fell asleep with a surprising ease despite the voice in his head telling him this was all too good to be true.

## Chapter End Notes

Ahhh some fluffy sex, how nice ;)

Thank you guys for your continued support and amazing comments!

# Chapter 10

## Chapter Summary

Rhys feels thrown to the wayside only to have Jack reach out at the most inopportune time.

## Chapter Notes

I'm back, babes! Thank you to everyone for being patient and for leaving amazing comments and all the kudos! I appreciate everything :)

P.S. just a reminder all my chapters are unbeta'd so sorry for any mistakes yikes

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

It was, in fact, too good to be true.

Rhys hadn't heard from Jack in almost three weeks and he was starting to get worried. Sure, every once in a while Jack would be too busy with work for a few days and Rhys wouldn't hear anything, but it had never gone on *this* long. Rhys felt... Discarded, forgotten about. Maybe that representative from Jakobs had been right, Jack had gotten tired of him.

Rhys always knew it could happen at any time, that Jack could just drop him and act like he never existed. He'd already done it once, after the first time they'd had sex, but that night after Jack had saved him... He thought something had changed between them. Jack was so passionate with him, so when Rhys had woken up alone with no sign of Jack anywhere he'd just figured he'd gone into work or something.

But then time stretched on and Rhys was still being left out to dry. It was no surprise that Jack had played with his emotions, the man had no regard for anyone but himself. Rhys was just his play thing, and like a child gets bored of its toys Jack had gotten bored of him. It hurt more than it should have because Rhys was pathetically romantic and had thought there was something between them. He should have known better, Handsome Jack was notorious to hit it and quit it. Not to mention Rhys had no place ever even being in contact with someone of Jack's status. He was just a sad little code monkey and Jack was the goddamn president, CEO, and owner of Hyperion. They never should have even met.

Vaughn and Yvette were starting to notice something was up with Rhys. His mood had completely changed, he knew that, but he couldn't help it. Whenever they'd pry he'd just brush them off, asking them to drop it because he'd rather not talk about it. If he didn't seem so helplessly depressed they probably would have hounded him a bit more, but it was pretty clear Rhys wanted nothing to do with whatever was bothering him.

One night, when they managed to drag Rhys out of his room, they had all gone to a bar (even Cathy, which Rhys wasn't thrilled about). Rhys had gotten way too drunk and cried the whole night away. Luckily he was too drunk to be comprehensible because he was pretty sure he'd tried to get

everything off his chest. When he'd asked them if he'd said anything the next morning Vaughn and Yvette both said they couldn't understand him through the tears and slurring. As depressed as he was about the whole situation he wasn't quite ready to die yet.

When rent came around Rhys got nervous, but when he'd called his landlord and found out the funds were wired to him from the usual account Rhys had breathed a (shocked) sigh of relief. He'd pondered over that for a while, wondering why Jack was still paying his rent. He let himself gain a little bit of hope again, maybe Jack was just that busy. It wasn't like the man was courteous enough to let Rhys know that he wasn't going to have time for him. But reality settled back in after a few days and Rhys came to the conclusion that Jack had probably just forgotten to cancel the automatic transfer and he had so much money he probably wouldn't even notice.

Rhys still used Jack's credit card out of spite whenever he could. If Jack was going to drop him but not take his name off of his account then Rhys was going to abuse it while he could. Rhys had a few bad nights where he got drunk in his room by himself and ordered a bunch of stupid things off the ECHOnet, half spending the money as a 'fuck you' and half wanting Jack to notice the money go missing in hopes that he'd remember Rhys existed and call him up to his office the next day. Rhys always just ended up even sadder than he was the night before when Jack never called.

By the time the third week of no contact was coming to an end Rhys was starting to get over it... Sort of. He was still hurt but he wasn't drinking the pain away alone in his room and he didn't feel as sluggish. The posters in his room definitely weren't helping the healing process but it was all he had left of Jack so he couldn't quite bring himself to get rid of anything. He figured in a few more weeks time he'd be okay enough to slowly start getting rid of things, but he knew it was going to take a while.

Rhys was at work when he'd gotten the text. He was filling out some mindless report on a project he'd been working on when he heard the soft 'beep' ring between his ears, silent to everyone around him but himself. He turned his cybernetic hand over from the keyboard he'd been typing at to pull up the message, instantly freezing when he saw who it was from.

Of *fucking* course Jack would decide the appropriate time to reach out would be when Rhys was starting to feel better about the situation. Not that Jack knew he'd sent Rhys into a downward spiral but still, the *nerve*. Part of Rhys was angry, but it was just a small part because the rest of him was singing with joy. He couldn't help it, he was going to fall right back into Jack's arms like he hadn't been dropped like a bad habit.

Rhys brought his flesh hand up to cover the smile on his lips as he read over the message an embarrassing three times, his heart pounding in his chest. It was a simple message, straight to the point, but it was enough to make Rhys giddy.

*'Be in my office in ten minutes.'*

It was quite the time constraint, but Rhys could manage. He quickly powered down his computer and practically skipped over to Henderson's office, peeking his head in to tell the man that Handsome Jack needed him before he was using his long legs to his advantage to take large strides to the Hub of Heroism.

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Jack, for lack of a better term, was freaked out. That night he'd spent with Rhys, the fear he'd felt when he thought someone else had gotten his hands on him... It made him sick. Jack wasn't attached, he couldn't be. He'd shut down that part of himself a long time ago, after his third marriage had gone to shit and he'd realized he was completely incapable of loving anybody but himself. He'd

been okay with that, it made things easier. When you killed as many people as he did it was a lot easier to not have anyone you cared about in the line of fire; or, rather, to not have anyone to care about to get in the way.

Nisha was a novelty. He didn't love her, she didn't love him, it was mutual. She provided him Eridium from Lynchwood, Jack paid her, and sometimes they fucked when the other was in town. It was by no means an emotional connection. They were both ruthless killers with one goal in mind: power. They understood each other, had the same ideals. They were like co-dependent alcoholics who stuck around with each other just to have someone else to drink with.

So why in the hell had Jack been so worried about some twink little data pusher that he had nothing in common with? Why did they have such intimate sex the night Jack had saved him from that prick? Why the fuck had Jack even gone out of his way to save him in the first place? Jack had wanted nothing more than to protect Rhys that night, make him feel safe *with* him. When he woke up with the lanky little fucker clinging to him like a leech he'd felt... Warm, *happy*. He just wanted to hold and be held, wanted to watch Rhys sleep peacefully beside him and know that he'd provided that sense of comfort.

But Jack did what he was good at, he fucked it all up. He'd jumped out of that bed as fast as he could and practically ran out of his penthouse to go straight to work. He didn't go home until he'd sent a Loaderbot to make sure Rhys wasn't there anymore, and when he did finally get home the first thing he did was change the sheets, too afraid to even smell the younger man on his things lest he start feeling *longing*.

The only thing Jack longed for was for his life to go back to normal. So he avoided Rhys like the plague, again, shoving his emotions as far down as he could. Not that he *had* emotions for the kid. He was just infatuated, got a little too close to the situation and now it was biting him in the ass. Rhys was just young and pretty and *new*, it was only natural that Jack got a little addicted before he kicked the habit.

Over the next few weeks he tried busying himself with work as much as possible. It wasn't hard, there was always a lot of shit going on for him to handle. But even the long hours and constant paperwork couldn't keep his mind from drifting to places he didn't want it to go. He tried to sleep as little as possible since his dreams were almost always about Rhys. And if they weren't about Rhys they were about killing people who were trying to get to Rhys. He hated it, he always woke up in a cold sweat with an erection he couldn't get rid of.

Jack started to try and think of Rhys as a disease rather than an addiction, hoping the negative connotation would squash the nagging in his head. Rhys was clingy, pathetic like a parasite. He couldn't protect himself, probably couldn't even shoot a damn gun without flinching. He was the complete opposite of anything Jack was into. Nothing about him was badass or strong or powerful. Rhys was soft and snarky and... Why were these sounding like good things?

Why did Jack like it when Rhys back-talked him or put him in his place? Why did he like that Rhys felt sympathy for the Claptrap units he'd eradicated and told him just how he felt about it? He liked how soft Rhys' skin was and the way he blushed so easily. Jack liked the power he had over him and how Rhys just soaked up being dominated. He liked the way Rhys said his name, liked when he called him daddy...

He needed to do something about this and *now*. He needed to crush this fantasy of his and destroy whatever happiness he thought he could have because he couldn't. Jack was a man destined to solitude, it was best he ruin whatever he thought they had now before he did much, much worse chasing fantasies.



Jack was in his penthouse, pacing in his living room and ignoring the fact that he was wearing the sweatpants he'd given Rhys to wear the night he'd brought him back there. He snatched his ECHOcomm up from the coffee table and chose the contact he was looking for, running a hand through his hair as the call rang and the video feed tried to connect.

Jack was just starting to get antsy from how long it was taking to get an answer when the call connected. Nisha's face filled the screen, cowboy hat tipped back casually.

"Heya, handsome," Nisha said with a smirk, eyeing Jack's bare chest.

"When's the soonest you can get to Helios?" Jack asked without preamble, eyes frantic as he stared at the woman on the screen. Nisha raised a confused eyebrow at him before her video went fuzzy and paused as she went into her calendar.

"Uhh... Few days, why? Something going on?" Her feed refocused and went back to normal as she closed out her calendar and resumed the call.

"Perfect. See you then, sugar tits," Jack said hurriedly with a wink before he hung up on her. He was definitely going to hear about that later but whatever, he had the solution to all of his problems.

—

Rhys was riding the elevator up to Jack's office with two minutes to spare, his heart pounding in his chest. He wasn't really sure what to say first. He should probably thank Jack for saving him from Julian, he never really got the chance to properly do that. He thought about asking Jack why he'd been avoiding him for the past three weeks but he figured he shouldn't bother. Jack didn't owe him any kind of answer and probably wouldn't give him one, anyway. Maybe at the very least he could ask Jack to let him know when he was going to ghost him for a while so Rhys didn't panic again. Was that too clingy?

Rhys gave Meg a smile and a wave as he walked past her desk, not noticing the forlorn look she was giving back. It would have been better if he'd noticed, if he'd stopped and taken the time to ask what was wrong. Maybe she would have told him, maybe she wouldn't have, it all really depended on whether or not Jack had given her specific orders on how to handle the situation. If Meg had the opportunity to warn him it might have softened the blow a little, but Rhys was too caught up in his own thoughts to pay her much mind.

The first thing Rhys noticed when the office doors slid open was the very loud, definitely exaggerated moans. It sounded like a bad porno in there, especially with the way everything echoed across the high ceilings. Rhys stopped dead in his tracks, only making it a few steps into the office before his eyes were met with the sight right smack in the middle.

Jack was... *Viciously* railing into some woman bent over his desk. They were both mostly clothed save where Jack had pulled down the front of her shirt so her breasts were hanging out and pressed up against the desk. Rhys quickly realized *she* was making the bad-porno sounds while Jack grunted behind her. Jack was gripping her hips with both hands, sweat on his brow from the exertion. He could feel the woman, whoever she was, staring at him, but he couldn't look away from *Jack*.

Rhys felt his heart sink into his stomach with a wave of nausea, every happy thought in his mind melting out of his ears like acid. Why did Jack call him up to his office just to see this? The whole avoiding schtick was doing just fine getting the message across that Rhys wasn't welcome anymore. So why did he have to build him up just to stomp him out like a stray ember from a fire? Rhys felt lightheaded, hands trembling at his sides as he took a blind step backwards.

Jack's gaze finally met his, blue and green eyes boring down on him with such wrath that Rhys thought he was going to summon hellfire upon him. Tears welled up in Rhys' eyes as they stared at each other for what felt like ages but could have only been a moment. Rhys thought, for a second, that something in those furious eyes softened as Rhys tried to blink away unshed tears, but he didn't stick around long enough to find out.

Rhys took another step backwards before he turned on his heel and walked numbly out of the office and down the hallway. He didn't look at Meg as he passed her desk, didn't look at anyone as he made his way through the Hub. He didn't realize he was going home until he was already there, his hands shaking as he used his keycard to get inside. Henderson was probably going to be pissed at him for not coming back to work but whatever, he didn't care. He didn't care about anything.

*Fine.* If Jack wanted to be like that, Rhys could give it right back.

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Jack's orgasm didn't feel good, didn't really feel like anything. He'd pulled out of Nisha and watched the sad little dribble of cum leak out before he almost instantly went soft. He couldn't really hear Nisha cursing up a storm below him, didn't really care to as he tucked himself back into his pants and sat down heavily in his chair.

"Seriously, Jack? That was pathetic," Nisha growled as she stood up and righted her own clothes.

"Yeah, tell me about it," Jack said flatly, rolling his chair closer to the corner of his desk where his computer was.

"You called me all the way up to Helios for a *revenge* fuck? What are you, sixteen?" Nisha snatched her cowboy hat up off the floor and placed it on her head before she turned to Jack, arms crossed over her chest and hip cocked to one side. Jack just gave her a noncommittal shrug as he kept his eyes focused on his computer screen.

"Okay, there's something wrong with you. Other than the fact that that was the single worst lay of my life I've never seen you go so far out of your way just to make someone jealous." That got Jack to look at her, glaring at her out of the corner of his eye.

"I wasn't trying to make him jealous," Jack said in a low, calm voice. The calm before the storm.

"Really? Care to explain what you were *trying* to do, then? Because it looks to me like—"

Jack was on his feet in an instant, grabbing her by the throat and bending her back awkwardly to slam her down against the desk. Her eyes went wide, hand instinctually reaching for the gun at her hip. Jack beat her to it though, pulling it from the holster and nudging her cowboy hat off of her head with the barrel before he pressed it against her forehead.

"Go ahead, say something else," Jack said, sickly-sweet. He pressed the gun into her forehead harder when she kicked him in the shin, lips curling into a snarl. They stayed like that for a while, Nisha glaring up at Jack while he silently threatened her life. It wasn't the first time they'd had a stand off like this, and it certainly wouldn't be the last.

Jack finally relented after a few long minutes, squeezing Nisha's neck too-tight before he let her go and took a step back. Nisha bolted up in an instant, swinging her fist out to catch Jack in the jaw. She was surprised when he just took it, head cocking to the side with the force before he righted himself again. He rubbed at the spot with his thumb, licking the bit of blood on his lip where she must have split it.

“You wanna know what’s got me so fucked in the head?” Jack asked, voice calm again as he pointed the gun at his temple for emphasis. Nisha just stared, she’d known Jack long enough that the wrong move could set him off. She really didn’t want to get into a fist fight today, she had other things to do.

Jack let out a hysterical laugh so twisted and deranged that he sounded like one of the many psychos down on Pandora. “*I*, ladies and gentleman,” Jack started for an audience he didn’t have, his voice taking on a theatrical, booming tone, “think, for some *fucking* reason, that my life could have even a shred of normalcy.” He’d turned towards the windows looking onto Elpis now, arms out at either side of him before he let them fall to his sides.

Jack let out a dreamy sigh that was anything but dreamy, Nisha knew. “Do you know what I do, Nish’, when I get my hands on something fragile?” Jack was almost whispering now, cradling his hands in front of him like he was holding something small and delicate, pistol still grasped in one hand. Nisha didn’t answer, knowing the answer would come anyway even though she already knew it. Jack spun back around, arm extended where he was pointing the pistol at her.

“I *destroy* it,” Jack seethed, face bitter with anger, eyebrows knit together and lips pursed tight. Nisha showed no fear at the gun pointed at her, she knew Jack wasn’t going to shoot her. This was just how he vented, vicious and vile as he was. Jack knew no other emotions than anger and bloodlust.

Jack’s eyes moved from Nisha to the gun in his hand, tracing over the emblem there. ‘*JAKOBS*’ it read, the ‘O’ stylized as the barrel of a revolver. Then Jack started laughing, loud and belly-aching as he lowered the gun so he could wrap his arm around his stomach from how hard he was *laughing*.

“The old bitch was right!” Jack exclaimed before he broke out into laughter again, practically wheezing with the force of it. Nisha was leaning back against the desk now, one leg crossed over the other as she watched, waited for this mania to pass.

“Hooo, *hooo*,” Jack cooed as he quelled his laughter, wiping a tear from his eye. He righted himself again, cradling the gun in both hands while he gazed down at it as if he were thinking. Then he tossed the gun back to Nisha, who caught it expertly and holstered it again. A long, contemplative silence filled the room; Nisha, contemplating why she even bothered with this crazy asshole and Jack, contemplating everything he thought was true about his life.

“You like him,” Nisha said finally, *frankly*, her tone deadpan. Jack didn’t respond, just turned his gaze to stare off into the distance over her shoulder. His stare was blank, like he wasn’t even there. Nisha let out a heavy sigh, pushing off the desk and taking the few steps to close the distance between them. She slapped Jack’s cheek a few times with a gloved hand, just hard enough to get him to look at her again.

“Why is your love life my responsibility?” She cooed almost sweetly, placing a kiss where she’d punched him.

“Who said anything about love?” Jack grumbled, squaring his jaw as he glared down at her over the bridge of his nose.

“*You* did,” she teased, a grin splitting her face, “Handsome Jack doesn’t get this bent out of shape just because he’s *entertaining* somebody. The only person who gets you this riled up is...”

“Yeah, yeah I get it.” Jack shoved her away, turning his back to her as he walked up to the windows until he was close enough he could touch the cold surface.

“Never turn your back on an enemy, Jackie,” Nisha called as she turned away as well, heading down

the stairs of the obnoxious pedestal his desk sat on. “Don’t worry, I’ll say we broke up on mutual terms.”

“Good, because I’m gonna say I dumped your ass!” Jack shouted back just before his office doors closed behind her.

## Chapter End Notes

I hope ya'll read the tags bc it got angsty up in here. Don't hate me too much.

# Chapter 11

## Chapter Summary

Rhys talks some shit to his best friends and occupies himself with a new daddy. Or he tries to, at least.

## Chapter Notes

And another one!! I figured since I was gone for so long I could update the next chapter for you guys. (But really I'm just impatient and wanna give you guys everything lol.)

Just a heads up:

\*The new tag of "threats of rape/non-con" aren't said *to* Rhys but are about him. It's nothing graphic or violent though, I promise, more just kind of an insinuation.

\*Lotta cursing in this one lol

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“And he *sucks* at giving head,” Rhys said, smirking around the rim of his glass, the salty edge cutting through the spike of tequila in his margarita.

Vaughn and Yvette were gaping, too shocked by everything Rhys had told them to even touch their drinks. After all the moping and angrily breaking some of his Handsome Jack memorabilia Rhys had taken it upon himself to invite his friends out to their usual bar and spill everything about his life for the past few months. It was great to get it off his chest, great to brag, but especially great to talk shit. Jack deserved it, after that shit he'd pulled in his office. It wasn't like he would ever find out that Rhys told his friends anyway, he'd *stressed* that if Yvette ran her mouth (because it was always Yvette) he would most definitely be thrown out of an airlock or strangled to death or maybe even fed to some hideous creature in R&D.

“So you're telling me... *Handsome Jack*,” Yvette whispered his name, hands cupped around her mouth dramatically to hide her mouth in case anyone around was an expert at reading lips, “is bad in the sack?”

Okay, he wasn't going to go *that* far. “What? No, definitely not, he's actually amazing,” Vaughn gagged at the thought of his best friend getting fucked by Handsome Jack, “it's just the blowjobs. I swear he's never given one before, it's pathetic. It would be like that asshole to never go down on anyone.” Rhys rolled his eyes as he licked up a little bit more salt and took another sip from his glass.

“Bro, I can't even... How is this real? Why would someone like him even *be* on a sugar baby website? I mean... Can't he, like, get anyone he wants?” Rhys shrugged at Vaughn's questions, feigning indifference even though he definitely still cared way too much.

Rhys hadn't gone into too much detail about his brief but extravagant bout with Handsome Jack. He'd mostly just told him about how they met, both online and in person, and about how Jack had been paying his bills. He told them about the credit card, which was currently ringing up a very large

tab behind the bar. What he didn't tell them about was the nights on the couch in Jack's office, that Jack had literally *killed* a man for him and how that really got him hot under the collar (he was such a bad person oh my god). And he definitely, *definitely* didn't tell them about probably the most intimate sex he'd ever had in his life once he woke up from his drug-induced coma.

Vaughn already thought his obsession with Handsome Jack was unhealthy, if his best friend caught wind that Rhys had, or thought he had feelings for the older man at any point Vaughn would be sending him on the first shuttle off Helios. Or maybe to a psych ward on Promethea (the ones on Helios were rumored to be R&D testing facilities so hopefully not one of those).

"I can't believe this is what you've been doing for the past few months, and you didn't tell us!" Rhys gave Yvette a pointed look, to which she rolled her eyes. "I know, I know, your life was threatened by the most unstable man in the galaxy, I get it. So, if he threatened you, why are you telling us *now*?"

Well, he guessed he knew that question was coming, he just wasn't expecting the memory to make his gut clench so hard. Rhys cast his gaze down to his drunk, poking at the cubes of ice with the stirrer that was shaped like a mini sword. How was he supposed to explain this? Jack had only been clear about Rhys not messing around with anyone else, Jack never said he wasn't going to. They weren't dating, or even exclusive, but it still hurt Rhys probably more than it should have... And Jack knew it would, too. Jack must have known Rhys was getting attached and needed to push him away.

"He stopped talking to me for a while... Out of nowhere," Rhys murmured, stirring his drink like a fidgety child, "which he's done before, so, not really a big deal. But then he called me up to his office today..." Rhys trailed off because wow, that was today, wasn't it? The wound was still fresh and he'd been so caught up in trying to convince himself that he shouldn't care, that he *didn't* care that he'd almost forgotten how much he actually, in fact, did care.

"Rhys... Are you crying?" Yvette asked as she leaned across the table a little to get a better look. Rhys quickly blinked away the unshed tears with a sniffle, shaking his head.

"What? No, *no*, no way, not crying. Nope," Rhys glanced up at her with a sheepish smile only to be met with a hard stare. He was never very good at lying to his friends. Yvette just waved her hand in a 'go on' motion before crossing her arms across her chest and leaning back in the booth they all shared. Rhys glanced at Vaughn, who looked equal parts worried and intrigued. Even though he knew there was nothing his friends could do about the situation it was nice that they cared.

Rhys let out a heavy sigh before he continued his story. "When I got to his office he was... He was fucking some woman over his desk," Rhys cringed at the memory, "he called me up there just so I would see it. I don't... I don't really know why, he'd already been ignoring me for a while, I got the message he didn't want me around anymore. He didn't have to..." He was going to say, *'be so cruel'* after that, but he remembered who he was talking about and realized Handsome Jack *was* that cruel. Half of what he was known for was being cruel.

Rhys glanced back up at his friends when Yvette placed a hand over the one that had been fidgeting with his drink. Their gazes were sympathetic and somehow that made him feel worse. He felt stupid for feeling this way, he knew it was dumb to be hung up on somebody who'd dated, married, and/or divorced more people than Rhys had ever even made out with in his life. But Rhys was really good at picking the wrong people to get involved with, his dating history proved that.

Rhys moved his hand from under Yvette's and waved it dismissively. "It's whatever, I'm just glad I got the opportunity," Rhys shrugged for probably the umpteenth time that night, "I'm gonna go back to robbing strangers blind and all will be well in the world again." His smile was over-the-top and he

knew his friends could tell it was fake but they didn't say anything. Rhys didn't say anything, either, about how he hoped Jack caught wind that he was using the website again.

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It was easy getting back into the swing of things. Rhys had thought all of his sugar daddies would have gotten annoyed with his disappearance and moved on, leaving Rhys to seek out new people to take advantage of. Surprisingly, most of his daddies were eager to see him back, already asking for pictures and shows, some even offering to pay extra.

Jack was still technically paying his bills so he didn't actually *need* to get money that way, but he wasn't sure how long Jack was going to go without noticing that he was still paying for everything. Also, Rhys totally wanted to shove it in the asshole's face that he was talking to other daddies again, even though Jack would probably never find out, or even care for that matter. But it made Rhys feel better knowing he was deliberately going against what the older man had said just out of spite.

Naturally, Rhys' spiteful ass took it upon himself to get back in contact with the sugar daddy he'd been talking to the last time Jack had kicked him to the curb. He'd been nice the last time, charming, good-looking, not too old. Rhys wasn't planning on sleeping with him or anything, but it was nice to have someone to go out to dinner and flirt with. He was by no means a replacement for Jack, was almost the complete opposite of the man, but he was nice enough that Rhys felt like he could spend time with the guy without worrying about being kidnapped or drugged (once in his life was good, thanks).

It had started off slow, just chatting online and sharing some pictures. Rhys was digging the salt-and-pepper look the man had going on and even though he was older he was still in great shape. He wasn't quite on Jack's level, Rhys was pretty sure nobody was, but he looked good for his fifties, great even. He had a daughter around Rhys' age and was pretty high up in Hyperion; he had his own office and oversaw a section of accounting. He'd asked the man, Martin, if he knew Vaughn but he didn't oversee Vaughn's team.

Rhys realized Martin was even more handsome in person once they'd started going out to dinner together. Rhys was impressed by just how charming he actually was, he was just on that border of *too* nice and it was a nice change of pace from Jack. He was polite to wait staff, he pulled out Rhys' chair for him when he'd sit, he'd let Rhys talk about his day and actually looked interested while he listened.

Rhys got a little nervous when they'd kissed the first time. It was soft, chaste almost, but the cool metal of the man's wedding ring against his cheek while he cupped his face made Rhys' gut clench. He'd noticed it before, Martin didn't always wear it but whenever he did Rhys couldn't stop staring. It didn't weigh on his conscience too heavily at first, they were just having dinner and talking, there wasn't anything serious happening. But once they started kissing, soft pecks turning into heated tongues turning into heavy petting, Rhys started to feel guilty.

It never got further than Martin making out with him against the front door of his apartment before Rhys slipped inside with a bashful smile, but it was definitely still wrong. Rhys felt even worse when he started to like it, being the other person to an affair. He felt taboo, wanted, *desirable* and it was just the right thing to mend the giant knife wound Jack had pierced him with. It was fucked up but Rhys couldn't bring himself to care after a while, the excitement of it too intoxicating.

Rhys tried not to dwell on the fact that he was chasing the same feeling he got from Jack. The excitement, the thrill, it was all things Jack made him feel when he pushed him around and told him what to do. He knew no one could be as powerful or demanding as Jack, and Martin wasn't even *close* to those things, but the fact that all of this was *wrong*, that Rhys was getting in between a

marriage was enough to set him alight with desire.

By now, Rhys had been on *several* dates with Martin and he was pretty sure all that heavy petting and making out was... Coming to its peak. They had dinner reservations tonight at a place a few floors up from where Rhys lived and Rhys was extremely nervous. Vaughn was going to be out on a date with Cathy, which he had stupidly told Martin during the day. There was no way the man wasn't going to try getting into his apartment, and there was no way Rhys was going to have a strong enough will to stop him. Rhys hadn't gotten laid in... What was it now, a month and a half, two months? Jack was the last person he'd been with and it was hard not to be horny all the time when you're cut off from such amazing sex. *Constant*, amazing sex, might he add.

Rhys was nervous about that, too. Not just the fact that he was probably, definitely going to have sex tonight, but also the quality of the sex. Martin was so... Sweet, and even though Rhys loved the affectionate touches and gazes, *sweet* always made him think *boring*. What if the sex sucked? What if Martin was too gentle, too *vanilla*? Maybe this was more a problem with Rhys being a total freak in bed but whatever, he was allowed to have his preferences.

Rhys had been texting Martin all day at work, smiling and blushing when the man would tell him how cute he was or how he couldn't wait to see what he wore to dinner. He promised he was going to wear the *amazing* watch Martin had gotten him the last time they went out and that seemed to make him happy. It really was amazing, made of shiny platinum, the watch face glowing with little stones of Eridium. He knew the watch had to have been expensive, not only from what it was made out of but also the technology it must have had in it to keep the wearer from getting Eridium poisoning.

Rhys was a little nervous at first when he'd received the gift, having heard horrible stories about normal people being exposed to Eridium. But Martin had assured him that it was specially crafted to be harmless, and that he never had to replaced the batter since the Eridium powered the timing mechanisms. Once Rhys was sure it wasn't going to make his last human arm fall off he admitted it was pretty damn cool.

—

Jack was about ready to fire Meg, and by fire Meg he meant throw her out an airlock. She didn't really deserve it, she was just doing her job (and well) but Jack hated being early to meetings and she'd deliberately forced him to be early to this one. She'd told him it started an hour and a half before it actually did, so when Jack showed up expecting to be a good hour and fifteen late, he found out he was actually fifteen minutes *early*. He'd tried to storm right out but Meg stood in his way, and if there wasn't some other schmuck just as early as he was sitting at the conference table watching he might have shoved her out of an airlock like he wanted to. Sadly, he'd just had a meeting the other day about how death does *not* boost company morale and he was trying to (spitefully) prove a point that he could go a week without killing anybody. It was extremely hard.

So, instead of killing Meg and going back to his office he threatened to send her down to R&D where he *promised* they would turn her into a thresher before he sat down at the head of the table. And then the guy started talking, which was exactly why Jack hated being early. He was some high-up accounting executive, which hey, at least Jack knew the meeting had to do with accounting now. Jack wasn't really listening to the guy, fading in and out of the conversation with nondescript grunts for answers.

"Have you heard of this website?" The man asked, holding his ECHOcomm out to show.

Jack had one elbow propped up on the armrest of his chair, chin in his palm as he stared anywhere but the other man. He barely registered that he was being asked a legitimate questions, swiveling his



chair so he could look at the device without moving his head only because the bright light caught his attention. When he saw the sugar baby website he was uncomfortably familiar with his eyes widened for a second before he narrowed them into a glare.

“Nope,” Jack said simply, popping the ‘p’ for emphasis. He swiveled his chair back to face the front of the room, keeping his face disinterested but his ears sharp.

“Oh, man, you should really think about looking into it. I mean, I know you can probably get hot, young ass whenever you want but not all of us are you,” the man laughed, turning the ECHOcomm back to himself so he could scroll through something, “I met this *real* pretty thing on here, practically got him wrapped around my finger.”

Jack glanced over at that, just for a second, then went back to staring at the wall with a grunt. Why was this guy talking to him like they were friends or something?

“It took a while but I’m definitely getting some tonight. Fickle little shit, that one. But I turned on the charm, made him feel real nice and safe, even bought him an Eridium-tech watch,” the man grinned, not that Jack was watching, “I can’t wait to tie that bitch up and *use* him.”

Jack made a disgusted face at that and straightened himself up a little, glaring down at the man next to him. Sure, Jack liked rough sex, but that didn’t really seem like what this guy was talking about. “You into rape or something?” Jack sneered, resisting the urge to grab the man by the front of his shirt and shake him. All he could think of was that sick fuck that tried to...

“I’m sorry?” The man asked, glancing up from his phone, shrinking back when he saw the look on Jack’s face. “No! No, I’m not into *rape*,” he laughed nervously and Jack didn’t like that one bit, “this kid is practically *begging* for it. Total slut, you wanna see?”

Jack didn’t answer, just kept his glare hard on the older man. Who the fuck did this guy think he was? He sounded creepy as hell, practically drooling over some kid on the internet, talking about tying him up in what sounded like a very non-consensual way. Jack was an asshole, a murderer, whatever you wanted to call him, but one thing he wasn’t was a *creep*. As entitled as Jack was, he couldn’t stand how entitled this man sounded about someone else’s choice.

When the phone was turned around and Jack was presented with a picture of Rhys’ bright, smiling face he lost it. It was the picture from Eden-5, Rhys had told him he’d taken it when he was on spring break his senior year in college. Why Jack remembered that, he had no idea, but the fact that this *asshole* was talking about tying Rhys up and *using* him filled him with an untapped rage. He looked so... *Innocent*, smiling back at Jack, little freckles on his cheeks. There was no way this guy was making it to dinner.

Jack ripped the ECHOcomm from the man’s hand and threw it so hard across the room it exploded into several pieces. The man shrieked a cut-off, “What the fu—,” Jack’s hands around his throat being what cut him short. Jack was on him in an instant, pulling him from his chair and slamming him up against the wall so hard his head bounced off of it with a loud ‘*thud*’.

“You think you’re hot shit, taking advantage of a *kid*?” Jack growled, so close to the other man’s face that their noses were almost touching. Jack really had no room to talk, he’d done the same exact thing to the same exact person and then practically spit in his face. Nobody’s perfect, right? Jack tightened his grip around the other man’s throat, making him cough and gasp for air. Jack pulled him forward only to slam him against the wall again, making his eyes cross momentarily from the impact to his head.

“You sick *fuck*, if I didn’t have something to prove this week I’d squeeze your throat so freakin’ tight

your head would pop off.” Jack threw the man to the ground in a heap, ignoring Meg’s relieved sigh from across the room when she heard Jack wasn’t planning on killing him. Yet.

Jack kicked the man in the ribs before he stomped his boot down onto his face, pressing the sole into his cheek painfully. The man was pleading beneath him, a constant stream of, “Please, I’m sorry, please, *please* don’t kill me.” Jack pressed his boot down harder, grinding his heel into the sobbing man’s cheek. He kicked him in the shoulder to get him to roll onto his back, his boot finding a place square in the middle of his chest. When Jack crouched down so their faces were side-by-side he made sure to press all of his weight into his chest.

“If you so much as *think* about reaching out to Rhys again, I will *end you*,” Jack whispered in his ear, voice gruff and venomous. The man was trembling beneath him, struggling to breathe as he nodded and choked out a wheezing, “*Okay*.” Jack didn’t think too hard about the fact that he’d given away that he knew Rhys and the consequences that might entail.

“You’re not even going to let him know that you won’t be there tonight, understand?” The man nodded again, and when Jack pulled back he took a good look at the man, memorizing his face. There was dirt on his cheek from Jack’s boot and there were already rings forming around his neck from Jack choking him. Jack couldn’t help but notice there wasn’t enough blood.

“Whats your name?” Jack barked, glancing over at Meg where she was keeping the other parties involved in the meeting out, deciding he wasn’t going to airlock her next week.

“M-Martin, s-s-sir,” the man, *Martin*, stuttered.

“Well, *Martin*, I’ll be sure to send your family flowers.” Jack gave him one swift kick to the cheek, and for a second Jack thought he might have accidentally snapped the man’s neck with how unnaturally his head turned from the force of it. Jack waited a few beats, and when he saw Martin’s chest rise and fall with a breath he confirmed he was alive. Unconscious, but alive.

When Jack turned around Meg was staring at him with a shocked, but pleased, look in her eye. He knew she was happy that he kept his promise of not killing anybody for a week, but Jack was just disappointed he couldn’t kill him. Maybe he did kill too many people... Nah.

“Should I cancel the meeting, sir?” Meg asked, and man if that wasn’t music to his ears.

“*God*, yes, I didn’t even want to be here in the first frickin’ place,” Jack grumbled as he brushed past her. He had other things to do, like figure out where that skaglicker had reservations tonight.

—

Rhys had already checked in for their reservation and he sat waiting patiently for Martin. It was just a few minutes past the hour so Rhys wasn’t too worried, he’d probably just gotten caught up at work. He perused over the menu for a while and ordered himself a very expensive glass of rosé, picking at the bread on the table. He was *starved*, he’d been so busy at work today that he had to skip lunch and he’d only had enough time to snack on a few crackers while he got ready.

He was wearing one of the suits Jack had gotten him (his wardrobe wasn’t about to suffer just because Jack had gotten tired of him), it was dark navy and tailored to his body, and he couldn’t help but smile at the memory of Jack groping his ass as soon as he’d put it on. He was wearing a white shirt and a blue tie that had accents on the it the same color of his ECHOeye underneath the blazer. Jack had gotten him the tie too, actually, said that he could forgive the skinny tie because of the way the blue accents made Rhys’ eye stand out even more somehow.

Rhys shook his head, clearing his mind of any thoughts of Jack. He was here to have a good night with Martin and have (hopefully) great sex. He took a sip of the sparkling drink from the fancy etched-glass flute it was served in with an impatient sight. He blinked on his ECHOeye to check the time, furrowing his brow as he realized just how long he'd been sitting there. Martin was never this late. He pulled up his palm-comp to go through his messages, disappointed to see Martin hadn't even let him know he was running late in the first place.

"Jerk," Rhys mumbled, sending a quick message of his own only to find that it couldn't be delivered. What the hell? Just then Rhys felt a presence approaching the table, and he looked up with a relieved smile as... Jack sat down across from him, clad in his usual attire. His smile quickly melted from his face and goddamn it why was his heart beating so fast?

"Heya, princess," Jack said casually, so *fucking* casually like he was supposed to be there. Rhys glared, but Jack's eyes weren't on his face, instead focusing on his outfit. "I got you that suit."

"What the *hell* are you doing here? How did you even know I was going to be here? Are you stalking me?" Rhys whisper-shouted, ignoring all the eyes turning towards them in awe of Handsome Jack's presence. Rhys turned to a woman who was staring a little too blatantly at them from the table to his right, her mouth hanging open in shock. "He's not that great, you can stop staring."

Jack snorted at that, bringing Rhys' attention back to him. "I'm pretty frickin' great, Rhysie, don't lie," Jack turned to the woman and flashed her a charming smile, and of course Jack would choose to be kind of a gawking peon *now*.

"Do you need me to spell out how not great you are right now?" Rhys was burning with anger, a deep hurt crackling in the flames of his rage like a damp stick in a camp fire.

"Let's not get into that," Jack brushed off as he ripped off a piece of bread and dunked it in the olive oil on Rhys' plate before taking an obnoxiously large bite of it, "I just came here to let you know your little," Jack waved his piece of bread around, "*date* won't be coming."

Was this really happening right now? This had to be some kind of fever dream built off of Rhys' longing for Jack, right? Rhys pinched his leg with his cybernetic hand and yup, that hurt, definitely not a fever dream.

"What," Rhys took a deep breath to calm himself, "are you *talking about*." It was more of a statement than a question, and when Jack reached for his flute Rhys slapped his hand away. Jack looked at him incredulously, eyes wide in disbelief. "I'm sorry, did I offend you?" Rhys asked, sickly-sweet. "If I remember correctly, *you're* the one who just showed up uninvited and told me, rather *menacingly*, that the person I was actually waiting for isn't going to show up."

Jack's face set into a hard glare then, jaw tense. "Oh yeah, fuck me for saving you from that creep, right?" Jack leaned across the table, getting closer to Rhys. "Do you have *any* idea what that sick motherfucker was saying about you today?"

"No, I wouldn't, because you haven't told me!" Rhys exclaimed, throwing his hands up in the air dramatically before he let them land heavily on the table. "In case you haven't noticed, you like to tell *half* of a story. So, forgive me if I'm a little *fucking* confused."

Jack growled, a sound Rhys has heard many times but under different context. The whole restaurant was staring now, the buzz of conversation having completely died out while everyone listened. Either man hardly seemed to notice, too consumed in each other.

“Don’t worry, I’ll fill you in, pumpkin,” the look on Jack’s face had made stronger men than Rhys *quiver*, but the younger man held his gaze with the same fury, “he was just *bragging* about fucking your tight little ass, said you were *begging* for it. Called you a slut and everything! *Real* winner there.” Rhys opened his mouth to say something but Jack didn’t stop. “Said he was getting you all buttered up so he could, how did he put it again? Oh yeah, *‘tie that bitch up and use him.’*”

Rhys didn’t know what to say. Actually, he *did* know what to say, knew what he wanted to say. He wanted to stand up and point his finger in Jack’s face, tell him that he’d done the same thing, ask him why he even gave a shit in the first place. But all Rhys could do was gape, his unbridled rage dwindling at the prospect that, if Jack was telling the truth, Martin had plans to... Make things pretty non-consensual. It freaked him out, how easily he’d been lead into the man’s arms just like with Julian. And here Jack was, snatching Rhys up out of the depths at the last second again.

Jack definitely didn’t have any right to be playing the victim card here, though. That big hero complex was getting to his head, spinning the story to pin it all on Rhys and that was just *bullshit*. Rhys hadn’t even realized he was tearing up until he finally blinked, feeling the way his eyelashes dampened from the contact. He wasn’t sad, he knew that much, chalking the embarrassing tears up to anger and bottled-up emotions.

“My *fucking* hero,” Rhys finally scoffed. He cast his gaze down to the table, unable to meet Jack’s burning glare now that the tightly sealed lid of emotions had shot off like a rocket from the pressure. Rhys took a few deep breaths to steady himself, forcing his tears to dry up and his face to fall indifferent. When he finally looked back up at Jack the older man was still glaring, and Rhys could see where a large vein was starting to pop in his neck from the tension in his jaw and shoulders.

“Who was she?” Rhys’ voice was quiet, as if he was unsure if he even had the right to ask. He didn’t, he definitely didn’t, but he had to try anyway. Maybe then he’d get some kind of closure from all of this even if Jack did just rip the wound back open with his bare hands.

“What?” Jack looked confused, still angry but also confused.

“What do you mean *what*? The woman you were fucking? When you called me up to your office?” Rhys’s voice was tight, like he was asking a question about the weather and not about who Jack cheated— *Whoa*. Jack couldn’t cheat on him if they weren’t dating, which they hadn’t been. What the hell was wrong with him? “*Who* was she?”

For a moment, Jack looked shocked, his eyebrows arching high up near his hairline. Rhys supposed he was shocked that he’d be so bold as to ask a question like that. But it was gone as quickly as it appeared, Jack’s face falling completely in a way that made Rhys feel uncomfortable. He didn’t look angry or surprised or confused. He didn’t look like... Anything. Jack was a man of intense emotions, always wearing his heart on his sleeve... In a way. His face was always so expressive, even when he looked bored or uninterested. This... This was something completely different, his face completely devoid of anything.

“My girlfriend,” Jack said flatly, so matter-of-fact that it felt like a slap in the face.

Rhys stood abruptly, so quickly that the back of his knees hit the chair and made it slide across the floor with a loud screeching sound. He couldn’t be there anymore, he felt like he was going to hyperventilate, and suddenly he could feel all those eyes on him, making him feel itchy all over. He didn’t say anything else, just gave Jack one last, long look before he turned and walked out of the restaurant. He wasn’t sure if Jack had called out to him or tried to stop him, but knowing that asshole he probably didn’t give a shit.

When Rhys finally got home he wasn't expecting to see Vaughn sitting on their couch with a crying girlfriend in his arms. Rhys had rushed through the door with such force that both of them looked up and Rhys was too emotionally drained to hide the way he grimaced at the sight of Cathy's makeup smeared all over her face. He also couldn't help the way his face set into an angry pout when she buried herself back into Vaughn's chest. *Why do they get to be happy?* Rhys thought selfishly despite the fact that this was clearly not a happy situation.

"Um...", Rhys muttered stupidly, shutting the door behind him quietly as he took another step into the apartment.

Vaughn gave Cathy a kiss on the top of her head and whispered something to her before he got up from the couch and approached Rhys. All Rhys could think about was how angry it made him that Vaughn had kissed her.

"Hey, bro," Vaughn whispered once he was close enough, pushing his glasses up the bridge of his nose, "sorry about all this," he gestured vaguely to the situation in the living room, "didn't expect you to be home so early."

Rhys shrugged, glancing back to Cathy for a moment and hating himself for relishing in her crying. "What happened to her?" Did he say that too loud? Cathy was looking their way now and *man* was she an ugly crier. He looked back down at Vaughn, who was now crowding him into the kitchen and out of her sight.

"Some crazy stuff went down today," Vaughn muttered, scratching the back of his neck, "I don't know the details, but apparently her dad had a... Well, was *supposed* to have a meeting with Handsome Jack today. We don't know what he did to tick him off, he won't say, but... Well, it wasn't pretty."

Rhys arched an eyebrow at his best friend as he leaned back against the island behind him, arms crossed over his chest. "Wait, what? I don't get it."

Vaughn's sigh was clearly exasperated but Rhys didn't really feel bad about making him spell it out. "Handsome Jack... He beat the *shit* out of Cathy's dad, bro. Like, he's in the hospital. The fucked up part is we're all just glad that psychopath didn't murder him."

Yeah, that sounded like Jack, except for the part where he *didn't* murder the guy. "You're sure it was Handsome Jack?" Okay, he probably deserved the look Vaughn was giving him but he'd spent several very intimate months with Jack and Rhys had never heard a story where he almost killed someone. "I'm just saying, he doesn't really seem like the type of guy to... Half-ass things, I guess is the nice way to put it?" Rhys gave Vaughn a sheepish smile and a shrug, realizing how much he sounded like an asshole right now.

"I mean, I don't really have to answer that, do I?" Rhys shook his head quickly.

They both stood there in silence for a while, contemplating the situation. Rhys would be asking questions like 'why would Jack do that?' or 'what did Cathy's dad do that could piss him off that much?', but this was Jack they were talking about. Jack didn't always need a reason to beat the crap out of somebody. Once, Rhys was getting ready to leave Jack's office when a guy from logistics had corrected Jack one too many times about something and Jack had reached across his desk and slammed the guy's head down on it so hard he was knocked unconscious immediately. Rhys left quickly after that.

Something started to nag Rhys in the back of his mind, tickling at his memory like he should *know* something about this. He wrinkled his brow and brought a robotic finger to his chin thoughtfully,

tapping every so often as he tried to figure it out. That little red flag at the edges of his mind turned into a big red flag, and suddenly Rhys' stomach dropped.

"Hey... Uh, hey Vaughn?" Rhys muttered nervously, licking his lips when Vaughn looked at him again. "What, uh... What's Cathy's dad's name again?"

"Martin, why?"

Rhys felt all the blood drain from his face and oh my god he felt like he was going to throw up. His knees went so weak he had to grab the edge of the counter to catch himself and he brought a hand up to cover his mouth just to make sure he didn't throw up. He didn't hear Vaughn when he asked if he was okay and he certainly didn't stick around to not-hear Vaughn say anything else. He was bolting into his room in an instant, slamming and locking the door behind him.

Once the door was shut he pressed his back up against it and slid down to the floor. Oh god, this was all his fault. There was so many things wrong with everything right now he didn't even know how to process them. Cathy's *father* was his sugar daddy, whom he'd *made out with* and almost *fucking* had sex with. Then the dumb bastard went gloating to Handsome Jack of all people, Rhys' *ex-sugar* daddy, and got his ass kicked for it.

Rhys forced down the part of him that was giddy with the fact that Jack had beat the shit out of a second person for him, along with a wave of nausea. He scrubbed his face with his hands and took deep breaths, bending his neck to put his head between his knees.

"I'm such a bad person," Rhys whispered to himself. This was so fucked. It was so beyond fucked that Rhys couldn't even comprehend how fucked it was. Without thinking, Rhys activated his palm-comp, selected Jack's contact, and typed up a message.

## Chapter End Notes

Remember when Rhys said one of his daddies looked kind of familiar? Bingo!!!

# Chapter 12

## Chapter Summary

Rhys has a total mental breakdown and somehow Jack's pretty good at handling it. Rhys takes Jack up on his offer.

## Chapter Notes

This chapter was originally another 9k'er but I cut it in half for some extra chapter count lol.

Edit: fixed some typos that the lovely ddraggy pointed out! Thank you :)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Rhys typed and deleted probably about seven messages before he let out a frustrated grunt and decided to call the bastard. Jack could shove his 'do not contact' rule right up his ass. Rhys was freaking out and had no idea what to do about the situation, and since Jack was part of all this crap it was his responsibility to fix it, too. The part of Rhys that was saying talking to Jack would help comfort him was his least favorite part of himself and he was choosing to ignore it.

The call rang once before it ended, and Rhys glared at the screen with a frustrated sound. *He fucking ignored my call!* Rhys thought angrily before he selected the little green phone button again. This time it rang a handful of times before he was set to voicemail again. Did Jack really doubt his persistence? Rhys had to call three more times before there was an answer, a very angry, very disheveled Jack on the other end. What the hell had he done in such a short period of time that got him looking like that?

"Do you not understand how being ignored works?" Jack snarled, and suddenly Rhys felt like he'd definitely overstepped a boundary. Well, he probably had overstepped many boundaries in the restaurant first, but this call could just be the icing on the cake. Jack looked like he was about to hang up, but Rhys made a frantic gesture with his free hand, eyes wide.

"Wait! Jack, wait, just—," Rhys halted a moment, surprised that Jack looked like he was actually contemplating listening to him. When Rhys' hesitance had Jack leaning for the 'end call' button again Rhys continued talking. "Just listen to me for a second, okay? This shit... It's all fucked up." Rhys let out an exasperated sigh, his flesh hand running through his hair, no doubt mussing his once-styled hair.

"A lot of shit's fucked up, pumpkin, ya gotta elaborate." Jack looked annoyed, which wasn't a surprise.

Rhys took a deep breath to prepare himself to explain everything. "Martin..." Rhys trailed off, resting his chin on his knees. When Jack raised a confused eyebrow at the name Rhys rolled his eyes. "The guy you beat the shit out of today?" Ah, that seemed to ring a bell, judging by the way the corner of Jack's lips turned up in a half-smirk.

Rhys suddenly realized it was a bad idea to call Jack. He was going to shove this in Rhys' face, he just *knew* it, but it was too late now. It seemed Jack was giving him a 'get out of jail free' card with this call, so if Rhys turned back and decided not to tell him what he'd called him for there was no way Rhys wasn't going to get strangled.

"Well, when I came home tonight, Vaughn— you remember me telling you about Vaughn, right?" Rhys was shocked to find Jack nodding slowly, so the asshole *did* listen sometimes. "Okay, Vaughn was on the couch with his girlfriend and she was crying, right? So I asked what happened and... Jack, Martin is her *dad*."

An uncomfortable silence settled between them for a long time, Jack processing what Rhys said, Rhys regretting ever having called him in the first place. And then Jack was laughing, gut-busting, bent-over laughing. Rhys felt his stomach clench and his throat tighten. It was like a knife was shoved right through his lungs, all the air escaping him painfully as Jack's laughter echoed from ear to ear.

It wasn't like Rhys hadn't been expecting something like this, he'd just realized a little too late that he never should have called. It was just like Jack to find this whole situation hysterical while Rhys felt like he was digging a fast grave. Rhys could lose his *best friend* over this if anyone found out, and *that* realization hit him like a truck. Vaughn would never forgive him, not in a million years, even if Cathy wasn't sticking around forever. Vaughn had been pretty open about the fact that he didn't like Rhys doing what he was doing, and karma came around and said, '*fuck you, Rhys!*'

"*What am I gonna do...?*" Rhys whispered, mostly to himself because Jack was still laughing, and Rhys would have hung up if he wasn't so stunned. Rhys could feel his face twisting up and his throat tightening painfully, and when he blinked a tear ran down his cheek. He was quick to wipe it away but more fell, too fast for him to stop. He was going to lose his *best friend* all because... God, there were so many things he'd done to get him to this point. Joining that stupid website, getting involved with Martin, getting involved with *Jack*. That was probably the stupidest mistake of them all.

Rhys let out a hiccuping sob but quickly covered his mouth, squeezing his eyes shut so he couldn't see the moment Jack noticed he was crying. He didn't want to realize that Jack's maniacal laughter was at his emotional expense, too. What Rhys didn't notice, however, was that Jack had stopped laughing and was looking at Rhys with such a softness beyond anything Jack had ever conveyed.

"Hey, kitten wait, don't cry," Jack cooed, and when Rhys opened his eyes that softness was still there, making Rhys' heart flutter in an unimaginably painful way. Why was Jack looking at him like that? It wasn't *fair*.

"Why... Why are you crying?" The way Jack asked made it clear that he didn't know how to handle the situation, like he was asking a child that wasn't his how he got hurt while looking for his mother.

And really, it was a stupid questions. There was a lot of things Rhys could be crying about right now; Jack laughing in his face, his best friend's girlfriend's dad being in the hospital, literally *anything* that happened at dinner. Jack was an idiot who'd probably never cried in his dumb life, but at least he was... *Trying*.

"I— I fucked up *so* bad, Jack," Rhys said through his tears, his eyes no doubt rubbed red and raw from wiping at them. "What if— what if they find out? Vaughn— he won't... He'll never talk to me again," Rhys' voice was small, defeated. He'd already lost Jack, he couldn't lose Vaughn, too. Yvette would still be friends with him but she'd be put in the middle and it would never be the same.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, hold on there, cupcake. You're telling me that your '*best friend*,'" okay, the air



quotes weren't necessary, "would stop talking to you if he found out that *I* beat the crap out of some old creep because he was literally going to *rape you*? Because that's what I'm hearing, and not that I've gotta whole lotta friends or anything but that doesn't sound like any best friend I would want."

Rhys stared at Jack through his holo-screen, all bravado again with his arms crossed over his chest. When he put it that way it sounded kind of ridiculous. Surely if Vaughn knew the whole story he couldn't be that mad, right? But the whole issue of the website to begin with still hung in the air. Rhys wanted to believe Jack, he really did, and just the idea that he might be right calmed down his crying.

"But Vaughn... He..."

"I know, hated the whole sugar baby thing, blah, blah, blah. I remember, Rhysie," Jack said with a wave of his hand and rolled his eyes. That made Rhys smile a little and Jack looked like he might be smiling back, too. "See, I listen," Jack grinned now, making Rhys roll his eyes. "Seriously, pumpkin, it'd be *pretty* frickin' messed up if he held it against you, and that's coming from *me*."

Rhys was definitely smiling now, because somehow Handsome Jack of all people had made him feel *better* about a bad situation. Sure, Jack looked pretty smug about it, but that just came with the territory. Rhys cast his gaze down at the floor contemplatively as he leaned forward and wrapped his arms around his bent legs, making sure to keep his cybernetic arm propped up so Jack could still see him.

"I mean, I guess you're right... But that doesn't mean he's not going to be mad. He's going to be *so* mad," Rhys muttered, looking back up at Jack who was waving a dismissive hand at him.

"Eh, whatever, he'll get over it. Coulda been a *lot* worse."

"Yeah, that's what Vaughn said," Rhys replied with a scoff, a slight smile still lingering on his lips.

"There ya go, look on the bright side!" Jack extended his arms out to his sides before crossing them again. Rhys couldn't help but chuckle at that and it warmed him the way his laughter seemed to make Jack smile. This time the silence was comfortable, but Rhys was the first to break it.

"Thanks, Jack," he said quietly, giving the older man a sweet smile.

"Y'know, I'd say you didn't have to thank me because that's the *humble* thing to do, but I totally deserve it." Rhys rolled his eyes and Jack cackled.

"You really know how to ruin a moment."

"Aww, you thought we were having a moment? How *sweet*," Jack batted his eyelashes like the showman he was.

"I'm hanging up now," Rhys deadpanned, lips pushing out in that famous pout.

"Once last thing, sweet cheeks!" Jack exclaimed before Rhys had the chance to hang up. He hovered over the 'end call' button just in case Jack decided to be even more of an asshole. "You let me know if anyone gives you shit about this, mmkay? Daddy'll take care of ya."

Rhys couldn't stop the blush that crept onto his cheeks and he tried to hide it behind his knees. He gave a little nod and a shy smile.

"Yeah, sure... Thanks again, Jack."

“Anything for you, pumpkin.”

Jack was the one who ended the call in the end, Rhys’ trembling hand not working properly after that. He gawked at the blank screen, not sure what to make of that last statement. Actually, he didn’t know what to make of *any* of it. Jack had comforted him, which Rhys didn’t even think he was capable of, and he’d done a pretty damn good job. It was doing horrible things to Rhys’ emotions, building him up again in dangerous ways. Jack had really seemed like he cared, and the way he’d looked at Rhys when he saw he was crying...

*No.* He couldn’t fall into this again. Jack was toxic, he destroyed everything his greedy hands touched. Rhys was just dreaming of a cliché that never took place in real life and was only meant for those horrible chick-flicks Vaughn loved. Jack wasn’t suddenly going to *change* or discover a part of himself just because Rhys had walked into his life. No matter how harsh (and realistic) that reality was, Rhys knew it was going to be hard to force down this feeling of longing that kept nagging at him like a bad itch.

Rhys finally closed his palm-comp and stood up from the floor with a grunt, joints sore from being balled up so tightly. He changed out of his fancy suit and into comfier clothes, allowing himself to indulge in the shirt he’d stolen from Jack that night he’d been kidnapped. It was soft and cozy and, if he was being completely honest, it still smelled like the older man. He deserved comfort right now, and one of Handsome Jack’s stolen shirts was the kind of comfort he needed.

With the flick of his light switch Rhys slunk into his bed, pulling the collar of the shirt up so he could bury his nose in it. This was the closest he was going to let himself get to Jack from now on, an old, ratty shirt. Or at least, that’s what he told himself. Once he was settled under the blankets Rhys finally realized just how tired he was, worn out from everything that had happened in the past few hours. As he drifted off to sleep he let his thoughts linger on Jack’s parting words.

*Anything for you, pumpkin.*

—

*Ring, ring, ring.*

“Please pick up, *please*.”

*Ring, ring, ring.*

“Fucking *fucker*.”

*Ring, ring, ri—*

*Click.*

“Yello’?”

Rhys let out a strangled sigh of relief as he saw Jack’s face come to life on his screen, glancing over his shoulder for the hundredth time. He really didn’t have time to appreciate Jack’s bedhead or his very shirtless torso, but he took a second to take it in while he could anyway. Rhys quickly ducked around a corner and into the first door he saw, closing it quietly behind him. It was pitch black in the room, which made sense considering the hour, the only source of light coming from the holo-screen illuminating his face.

“Heeyy,” Rhys whispered, stretching the word out with a forced casualness. He smiled at Jack nervously, giving a little wave of his flesh hand like an idiot. “*So*, remember when you said to let you

know if anyone bothered me about the whole Martin thing?” his voice was still a whisper but rushed now as he backed farther into the room blindly, glancing up at the locked door.

Jack looked confused, which was fair, he had definitely just been sleeping (for once). The older man grumbled something under his breath that Rhys couldn't understand as he pushed himself into more of a sitting position, leaning against the large headboard of his bed. “Mmm-yeah, why?” Jack's voice was groggy with sleep and Rhys found it incredibly endearing, but now was not the time.

“Does the offer still stand if I waited a while before I said something?” Rhys' back hit a wall rather quickly, and he nearly jumped out of his skin when he bumped into a broom handle. *Perfect*, a janitorial closet. Now he really had nowhere to run.

Jack looked a little more awake now, eyes hardening as he processed what Rhys said. “How long is *a while*?” That wasn't the answer Rhys was hoping for.

“Uhh, well, from what I can tell this guy has been following me for a few days. So either he's *really* bad at stalking people or this has been going on longer then the past few days and I just happened to notice.” Rhys sounded casual, like he wasn't talking about someone following him through Helios for an indeterminable amount of time.

“Someone's *following you*?” Jack growled, definitely much more alert now. “Where are you, kiddo?”

Rhys cleared his throat. “Hm, okay, I see why you'd ask that. What if I told you I didn't know?” Yup, Jack was mad now.

“What the hell is that supposed to mean?!” Rhys winced at the volume of his voice. Thankfully he had the audio coming through his ECHOtech and not the speakers.

“So I might have gotten really focused on trying to lose the guy and less on actually paying attention to where I was going. Oops?”

Jack growled as he rolled out of bed, pulling on his discarded pants. “You're a freakin' idiot, you know that? Just ping me your location.”

Rhys looked thrilled for a moment, blinking his ECHOeye to send Jack his location. The hopeful joy quickly dissipated as he heard the familiar sound of a handle jiggling. His heart stopped in his chest, the fear he'd momentarily forgotten quickly rushing back. All the color drained from his face as he stared at the door, silently wondering why the hell this door was a normal door and not the normal electronic sliding doors that littered Helios. *Oh, right, I'm in a fucking janitor closet!*

“Just stay put okay, dum dum?” Jack's voice brought Rhys' attention back to the screen. He opened his mouth to respond but all that came out was a squeak as his whole body jerked in fear from the loud *'bang!'* that resonated through the small room.

“Oh god, oh *god*. Jack, hurry up, he's trying to break down the door!” Rhys was still whisper-shouting even though the man on the other side of the door clearly knew he was inside.

“Don't get your panties in a bunch, just stay calm.” Jack hung up, leaving Rhys in a dark closet by himself with a stranger very adamantly trying to break down the door.

Rhys switched on the light on his palm-comp and frantically searched the close for something he could use as a weapon. He decided on a screwdriver that was sitting on a shelf, turning it in his hand a few times to figure out how he should hold it. He decided on overhand, figuring he could stab it down into the guys neck that way. He *really* hoped Jack sent somebody who lived close by.

Just as the door seemed like it was about to give way Rhys heard a shout, too muffled by the door to make out. Heavy footsteps, possibly somebody running, was followed by what was definitely a scuffle. Rhys shrunk into himself, flinching as he heard fists colliding and grunts of exertion. Didn't either of these idiots have a gun? He wasn't really one to talk, he didn't have a gun, either. Maybe a gun could have avoided this whole situation.

When the fighting stopped Rhys tensed, ready to strike in case the wrong person opened the door. Would he even know who was the wrong or right person? Rhys hadn't gotten a good look at the guy following him and it wasn't like he was going to recognize some random Hyperion grunt. Talk first, attack later was probably the best approach.

Footsteps neared the door, a jiggle of the handle followed by a soft curse, then the familiar sound of a keycard beeping entry into the room. That probably should have let Rhys know that whoever was on the other side wasn't trying to break in, therefore it wasn't the man who had been chasing him. But he was in full-on fight or flight right now and all he could focus on was how he planned on stabbing this guy to death with a screwdriver.

The door swung open to reveal... *Jack*, disheveled from sleep and the fight he'd just gotten into. He was backlit from the lights in the hallway, the edges of him appearing to glow like a true knight in shining armor. His hair was a mess and there was a small cut on his eyebrow, but otherwise he looked okay. He was wearing his usual jeans but only the yellow sweater he wore under all of his layers, the hem hanging loose around his hips and the sleeves bunched up around his elbows.

"What, you gonna stab me?" Jack asked with an arched brow, glancing between the screwdriver and Rhys.

Rhys instantly dropped the screwdriver and, without thinking, rushed at Jack. He wrapped his arms around the older man's middle, curling his fingers into the soft material of his sweater. When he buried his face in the larger man's neck he was welcomed with the familiar musky scent of him laced with a salty layer of sweat and adrenaline. Jack was stock-still for a moment, shocked by Rhys' sudden embrace, but it wasn't long before he had his arms wrapped around the slender frame. He curled one hand at the nape of Rhys' neck, fingertips toying with the little hairs there. His other arm encircled Rhys' shoulders, squeezing them tight.

"I didn't think *you* would come," Rhys murmured into Jack's neck. He felt so safe with Jack holding him like this, crowded against his chest. He dared to nuzzle a little closer and his heart soared as Jack squeezed him tighter.

"What the hell is that supposed to mean?" Jack grumbled into his hair, and that had Rhys smiling.

"Nothing, sorry, I just... I thought you were going to send someone," Rhys paused and looked over Jack's shoulder, grimacing at the beaten body lying on the floor, "but... I'm glad you came." Rhys tucked his head back into Jack's neck, nosing softly at the skin. He was just high on adrenaline still, judgement too clouded to register what he was doing.

"*That's* what she said, baby," Jack said with a laugh, letting out a puff of air as Rhys pressed an elbow into his ribs. "We're actually pretty close to my office, Hub's right over there," Jack jerked his chin in the direction of the Hub.

Rhys lifted his head to glare at Jack, ignoring the blush that was blooming on his cheeks at how close their faces were. Jack chuckled at him and brushed his thumb over the port in Rhys' temple. Rhys shuddered at the sensation, eyelids fluttering. He forgot Jack used to like doing that, said he liked watching how it made Rhys all weak in the knees.

“You know what that means, right?” Jack purred, ghosting over the port again. He hummed at the way it made Rhys clutch him tighter. “Your instincts were bringing you straight to ol’ Jack.” Jack grinned as Rhys jerked away from him, breaking their embrace.

“Haha. That was a sarcastic laugh, if you couldn’t tell,” Rhys crossed his arms and cocked his hip to one side. That earned him a laugh from Jack, except this one was genuine. Rhys followed as Jack turned and exited the small closet, pointedly ignoring the bloody mess of a man on the floor. “Why didn’t you bring a gun?”

“Huh? Oh, I did,” Jack answered, pulling a pistol from seemingly out of nowhere, “just felt like doin’ it the old fashioned way.”

“There’s something wrong with you.”

“There’s a *lot* wrong with me, baby.”

Rhys scoffed, that was the damn truth. “Is, um...,” Rhys started, hyper-fixating his gaze on Jack so he didn’t look at what he was sure was a gruesome corpse, “is that guy... Dead?”

Jack looked over his shoulder casually, obviously unfazed by dead bodies. He squinted as he watched for a minute, gauging the state the man was in. “*Nah*,” Jack said, turning back to Rhys, “I’ll send someone to clean the poor bastard up so we can interrogate ‘em. What were you doin’ wandering around this late at night anyway, pumpkin?”

“*Ugh*, I was stuck at work,” Rhys complained dramatically, rubbing at his tired eyes as they started down the hallway, “lost track of time, I guess.”

They walked together in silence and if Jack noticed the way Rhys was glancing over his shoulder every few moments he didn’t say anything. Rhys was going to ask why Jack hadn’t gone home by now, why he was still walking with him even though they were already halfway to Rhys’ apartment, but instead he let himself appreciate the moment for once and kept his mouth shut. Knowing Jack he’d turn around and head back home spitefully at the insinuation that Rhys might not want him there, even if that wasn’t the case at all. Before he knew it they were at the door to his complex, and then the door to his apartment, and Rhys was suddenly feeling very self conscious.

Rhys hadn’t spent much time in Jack’s penthouse, just slept in the bed and then scurried out quickly in the morning once he’d realized he’d woken up alone. Even though he didn’t necessarily get a grand tour he knew his measly little apartment was probably going to get a good laugh out of Jack. He wished now that he’d told Jack he could have walked himself home. With a heavy sigh Rhys reached for his keycard and prayed that his apartment was at least *clean*.

The door unlocked with a familiar beep and the slide of the locking mechanism. Rhys took a step inside before he turned to Jack, ready to thank him and wish him a good night but, unsurprisingly, Jack had other plans. The older man brushed past Rhys and right into the apartment, making Rhys’ heart jackhammer in his chest. *Well, here it comes*, Rhys thought bitterly.

Jack was standing in the middle of the living room, hands on his hips as he surveyed the small apartment. Thankfully, the place was mostly clean, save for a stray glass on the coffee table and a blanket that was half falling off of the couch. Jack turned to Rhys when the door clicked closed behind them, Rhys’ eyes wide and uncertain. Jack looked contemplative, one eyebrow arched high and lips pursed tight.

“Yeah, total shithole,” Jack confirmed with a grin, “where’s your little nerd friend, kitten?”

Somehow that question was more irritating than the insult to his apartment, but that was really more of a Rhys problem. He rolled his eyes and made his way over to the coffee table, plucking the glass off the table so he could bring it into the kitchen.

“He’s staying at *Cathy’s*, because that’s still a thing for some reason,” Rhys muttered bitterly, placing the glass in the sink. He wasn’t a big Cathy fan, and after the whole thing with Martin he was all the more wary of her. When Rhys turned around Jack was right in his personal bubble, hands reaching out to grasp the counter on either side of him so Rhys was boxed in by Jack’s strong arms. The grin on Jack’s face was *wicked*.

“Ooh, got the place to yourself, Rhysie?” Rhys blushed at the implication in those words, leaning back when Jack leaned closer only to be met with the hard surface of the counter. “I could stay, if you want,” Jack’s voice was barely above a whisper, his nose ghosting over Rhys’ cheek as he leaned in to whisper in his ear, “make sure nobody comes bustin’ down your door, because that’s what *heroes* do.”

Such a narcissistic comment shouldn’t have made him hot all over but it did. Even though Jack’s egomaniacal tendencies made Rhys boil with rage most of the time, for some reason they just *really* did it for him in bed. Not that they were in bed, or were going to bed. Rhys needed to stay strong, he couldn’t fall back into Jack again so easily. If he was always there to crawl right back to him then Jack would always toss him around like a toy.

But Jack was so *close*, so warm and inviting. If Rhys was being honest he didn’t want to spend the night alone either, not after everything that just happened. Jack was just being a nice guy. *Fat chance*, Rhys thought, almost laughing out loud at the thought of Jack being nice. Rhys hadn’t realized his hand was moving until it was pressed flat against Jack’s chest, not pushing him away, just touching gently. He was a weak, weak man.

“Do *you* want to?” Rhys asked softly. He wanted to know if Jack wanted to be here, wanted to hear him say it. Jack was a master of deflection, could counter any unwanted question with ease, so unless Rhys got a straight answer Jack was going home. It was a good boundary for himself, there was no way Jack was going to give a genuine answer.

“*Yeah*,” his whisper was deep and gravelly, lips pressed right against the shell of Rhys’ ear. It made Rhys shiver and in an instant all of his walls were knocked down. *So cliché*, rang around in Rhys’ head.

Rhys’ heart was fluttering. Jack *wanted* to stay. This was probably going to be yet another prime example of how Rhys was given an inch but took a mile, hung up on one little word. He was getting his hopes up again, he was sure of it, but he couldn’t stop himself from leaning into Jack when the larger man took a step closer, pressing him into the counter. It wasn’t forceful or overpowering, Rhys felt cradled more than anything.

“So stay.”

## Chapter End Notes

Yes, I am a sucker for condescending hero Jack. Rhys is a poor damsel in distress who is very, very weak to Jack's ways and I'm not sorry.

# Chapter 13

## Chapter Summary

What's the best part about making up? The sex, definitely the sex.

## Chapter Notes

Ya'll knew it was coming, right? Enjoy! (Still unbeta'd!!)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Jack's lips were on his immediately and Rhys couldn't stop the surprised, happy little sound he made at the contact. Somewhere, in the back of Rhys' mind, he'd faintly entertained the idea of making Jack sleep on the couch so they *wouldn't* have the sex they were definitely, without a doubt going to have. He was such a fool.

Jack's hands left the counter in favor of wrapping his arms around Rhys' waist, palms pressed flat against his back as they roamed. Rhys followed suit, wrapping his arms around Jack's broad shoulders while a soft moan escaped his lips as Jack started prodding about his mouth with his tongue. Jack gave an answering chuckle into the kiss, gently biting on Rhys' bottom lip just to get him to whine.

Rhys was so easy with the way he wrapped his legs around Jack's waist when the older man cupped the backs of his thighs to guide them there. He hooked his ankles together and let Jack support most of his weight between the tight grip on his thighs and the way he was pinning him against the counter. His shirt had rucked up enough to slip from his waistband, the cool edge of the counter sending a shiver up his spine where it touched his bare skin.

His thighs must have flexed tighter around Jack's hips at the sensation, making Jack squeeze right back. Rhys whimpered against Jack's lips, the sensitive underside of his thighs tingling delightfully where Jack's blunt nails dug in. Rhys' hands found their way into Jack's hair and tugged before he scratched the fingernails of his flesh hand along Jack's scalp. That got Jack to groan and take a step back from the counter, fully supporting Rhys' weight in his hands and at his hips.

Their kiss broke long enough for Jack to ask where the bedroom was and for Rhys to answer, but it was like it had never stopped once Jack was heading down the hallway. Rhys was amazed with Jack's strength. The older man carried him down the hall like it was nothing, pressing him up against the closed door with force when they got there. Rhys let out a surprised little sound when his back hit the door, giving Jack the opportunity to leave his lips in favor of his neck.

Rhys tipped his head to one side so Jack could get at all the skin he could reach. He untangled his flesh hand from Jack's hair so he could push it down the back of his shirt, feeling the strong muscles of his shoulders where they tensed to keep them upright. An unexpectedly hard suck and then bite to his neck had Rhys crying out and dragging his nails up Jack's back. Jack hissed at the sting of it, and Rhys would have apologized if he hadn't immediately ground their hips together in satisfaction.

“I think that one’s gonna leave a mark, kitten,” Jack purred against the spot, and Rhys swore he could feel Jack smirking against his skin. It made his cock twitch, thinking that Jack had left a dark, visible hickey on him. “You’re gonna have to scratch harder if ya wanna do the same.”

Was that a challenge? Or an invitation? Rhys took it as both, because the idea of leaving sex-crazed scratch marks on Handsome Jack’s back during the best make-up sex of his life was way too tempting. And, wow, okay, when did he decide this was make-up sex? Did he seriously already forgive Jack without even a semblance of an apology? He was pretty pathetic.

Jack swung the door open without any further preamble and tossed Rhys onto the bed. Rhys should have been turned on by being man-handled like that, normally he would have; too bad he was suddenly overcome by the embarrassing realization that Handsome Jack was standing in his room, surrounded by a disgusting amount of memorabilia dedicated to him. Rhys felt his cheeks heat up as Jack’s hungry eyes left him to look at the poster on the wall behind him, and the one above his desk, and the one at the head of his bed; well, technically Jack had already seen *that* one when Rhys had...

“Shut up,” Rhys said quickly as Jack’s face started splitting with a grin. Rhys shrunk back as Jack sauntered over to him, and unfortunately Rhys was too nervous to appreciate when Jack pulled his shirt over his head.

Jack crawled over him in the bed like a predator hunting its prey, and Rhys definitely felt hunted. Jack’s silence was unnerving even though his grin said plenty. Knowing Jack, he was probably thinking of the most insulting thing he could say, laughing at his own jokes in his head. It wasn’t like Rhys was expecting a visit from the man (the myth, the legend) anytime soon, or *ever*. If he had been he definitely would have taken down the posters.

“And here I thought you just had *one*,” Jack teased, chuckling as Rhys pouted and turned a darker shade of red. “Aw, don’t give me that look, pumpkin. I’m *flattered*. Who wouldn’t want me everywhere they looked?”

“I said *shut up*,” Rhys grumbled, and he swore he leaned up to press a rough kiss to Jack’s lips just to get him to stop talking. The kiss didn’t keep Jack from cackling, but Rhys was just relieved the older man focused on removing his clothes instead of tormenting him.

Rhys felt like his skin was on fire everywhere Jack touched, each brush of fingers as Jack pushed and pulled his clothes from his body making Rhys shiver. He helped Jack get him out of his clothes, which really meant he let Jack move him around the way he needed to pull everything free. By the time Rhys was in his underwear Jack was still technically half dressed and Rhys wasn’t having it one bit.

The younger man swatted Jack’s hands away when he tried going for his boxer briefs and instead took the lead. He ran his hands up Jack’s front, ghosting over the skin just barely, letting the cool plates of his cybernetic hand scrape over a nipple gently. Rhys smirked at the way Jack shuddered and started to kiss along his jaw, nipping at the curve of it.

When Rhys’ hands reached Jack’s shoulders he continued his gentle prodding across his back, tracing over where he’d scratched the man earlier with metallic fingers. He let his hands dip below the waistband of Jack’s sweatpants and grabbed two handfuls of firm cheeks. Jack suddenly jerked away, Rhys’ hands falling free from his pants as the older man sat back onto his knees. Rhys gave him a confused look, worried he’d done something wrong.

Jack stared at him for a moment, silent, before he grabbed Rhys by the thighs and pulled him closer down the bed. “I’m the only one who gets ass around here, got it?” Jack growled, and if he wasn’t still sporting an erection Rhys might have thought his tone was angry.



Rhys nodded at him innocently, only to gasp when Jack shot a hand forward to grip his chin in a bruising grasp. Rhys whimpered and Jack let up a bit, running his thumb over Rhys' bottom lip before pressing inside. The younger man didn't hesitate, licking at the pad of Jack's thumb and curling his lips around it so he could give a firm suck.

"You understand, pumpkin?" Jack's voice was firm but much less threatening now, eyelids fluttering over blue and green eyes as Rhys continued to work at his thumb.

"Yes, daddy," Rhys murmured around the digit, cheeks flushing under Jack's pleased gaze. Rhys tentatively reached out for Jack's waistband again and when he was rewarded with no resistance he started to pull both his sweatpants and underwear down.

Rhys let out a pleased hum as Jack's cock sprung free, his own giving a twitch of interest. Jack shuffled out of the fabric and kicked it off the end of the bed in the same motion that he yanked Rhys' underwear free and tossed them somewhere across the room. Rhys was pretty sure he heard them catch on something and knock whatever it was over, but he didn't really care at the moment.

Rhys was starting to get impatient. He hadn't gotten laid in weeks and had pretty much been too sad to jerk off, he *needed* this. He half-rolled onto his side so he could reach into his bedside drawer for lube, but Jack had other plans. The larger man easily pushed Rhys into finishing his roll by a hand on his hips, getting Rhys onto his stomach. Jack was settled between his spread legs and soaking up the view. Rhys glanced at him over his shoulder but didn't protest, actually he did quite the opposite. He shuffled back a little so his ass was sticking up in the air just enough, even going so far as to wiggle it temptingly.

Jack growled appreciatively and grabbed at the soft flesh, kneading it in his hands like dough. He brushed the pad of his slick thumb over Rhys' tight hole, enjoying Rhys' shuddering breath as he arched his hips up a little farther.

"Mmm... Always so eager for me, baby," Jack murmured, using his free hand to spread Rhys' legs some more. "Such a good boy, spreading those legs for daddy." Jack ran a hand up the back of Rhys' thigh and gave a firm squeeze.

Rhys preened under the praise, far too proud of himself for it. Rhys managed to dig out the bottle of lube and Jack was tugging it from his grasp before he even had the chance to hand it over. Jack gave a playful smack to his ass and Rhys couldn't stop himself from moaning. God, he missed this more than he cared to admit. He was probably going to be mad at himself in the morning, when he woke up alone and realized he'd let himself get played again. But right now all he could think about was Jack, about his warm hands on his skin and the slick fingers teasing him.

Rhys clenched around nothing and Jack hummed, continuing to rub his fingers on and around the tight ring of muscle but never pressing in. Rhys was desperately trying to arch his hips back to get more friction but Jack wasn't complying, instead just keeping a steady pressure there. For a moment, Rhys thought Jack was ready to get on with it when he felt the pad of his thumb pressing against him again, but the touch was gone as quickly as it had come and Jack resumed tracing circles.

"Jack," Rhys panted, whining when the older man added a bit more pressure only to ease up again. Rhys buried his face in his pillow to hide his pathetic whimpers, cock weeping beneath him.

"What's the magic word, Rhysie?" Jack cooed behind him before he bent down to place a sharp bite on that bubble butt. Rhys hissed but couldn't stop the way he arched up for more, desperate for anything he could get.

"Please," Rhys mumbled into his pillow, only to receive the slightest dip of Jack's index finger

before it was pulled back out. Rhys shuffled so he was fully seated on his knees now, face down, ass up. A hot pulse of arousal coiled in his gut when Jack groaned and licked at the tender crease of flesh where thigh met ass. Rhys turned his head away from his pillow and took a few panting breaths. He lifted his head just enough so he could look back at Jack over his shoulder, gaze hot and wanting.

“Please, *please* finger me, Jack.” Rhys tried his best to sound just as desperate as he felt, even going so far as to stick his lip out in a slight pout.

Jack’s eyes took on a hungry gleam that had Rhys shuddering beneath him. Rhys loved those eyes and how expressive they were, so telling of Jack’s emotions. He felt privileged that he’d been around the older man enough to be able to read them like a book. Sometimes there was so much passing between the blue and green irises it was hard for Rhys to tell what Jack was feeling, but right now it was clear. Arousal, hunger, *need*. Rhys relished in those feelings that felt like they were being burned into his skin like a brand. *Jack* needed *him*.

Rhys’ eyes fluttered closed and he let out a high-pitched moan when Jack finally, *finally* pressed two fingers in. They slid in easily from all of the teasing, Rhys’ body already relaxed and, if it was up to him, ready to take Jack’s cock. He let his head fall back into his pillow as Jack worked him open, scissoring his fingers as he thrust them in and out.

Rhys started rocking his hips back to meet each thrust of Jack’s fingers, not having a care in the world about how deprived he must seem. It all felt way too good, and when Jack pressed in a third finger and crooked them to brush his prostate Rhys had to fight back the urge to come. He snapped his hips back onto the fingers with a loud moan and his fingers curled tightly into the sheets in desperation.

“Okay,” Rhys said breathlessly around another moan as Jack pressed into the bundle of nerves again, “okay, okay, *okay*. Fuck me, I-I can’t—,” he was cut off by his own loud cry of pleasure when Jack gave a particularly hard stroke. “I can’t take it anymore, please!” Rhys wanted so badly to reach down and stroke his own cock just so he could come, but he couldn’t risk this ending too soon.

“So impatient,” Jack tutted as he pulled his fingers free. Rhys whined at the loss even though he knew it meant better things were to come. Rhys was so insatiably horny; in fact, he was pretty sure he’d never been this horny in his entire life.

Rhys was incredibly thankful that Jack didn’t tease him once his cock was slicked up. As soon as he felt the tip of his cock at his entrance it was pressing in, but even *that* was too slow. Rhys braced himself on the bed by his forearms so he could get enough leverage to rock back, *hard*, onto Jack’s cock. He cried out along with Jack’s breathless curse as he took him to the hilt and took up his own rhythm.

“Holy *shit*, baby,” Jack groaned behind him, big hands coming up to grasp Rhys’ hips. The hold was gentle, not bruising or demanding like Jack usually was. He let Rhys control the pace for now, his own hips lazily rocking to meet each of Rhys’ backward thrusts.

“Yes, yes, *yes*,” Rhys chanted as he worked Jack’s cock inside of him, toes curling from the pleasure. “I love your cock, daddy... *Mmh*, y-yes!” Rhys sounded loud to his own ears but that didn’t stop him, each moan and whimper louder than the last.

“Yeah, that’s right, baby,” Jack purred, voice deep and thick with lust, “take that fat cock like you were fuckin’ *made* for it.” Jack started to meet Rhys’ thrusts harder, the sound of their skin slapping together echoing around them. He tightened his grip on Rhys’ slim hips just enough so he could help Rhys rock against him faster.

It was too much. Rhys was hot and out of breath and he was so close to coming that he was seeing stars. Jack shifted his hips at just the right angle to get Rhys to sob in pleasure, the head of his cock dragging over his prostate deliciously. That was it, a couple more thrusts and Rhys was going to—

Without warning Jack pulled out, and this time Rhys' sob was in disdain. "Jack, what—," he tried to look back at the older man over his shoulder but Jack was flipping him before he got the chance, cutting his exasperated question short. To Rhys' relief he didn't have any time to complain. Jack was over him again, lips a bruising force against Rhys' own as he lined himself up.

Rhys reached between their bodies so he could grab Jack's cock to help guide it in, moaning into their kiss as Jack sunk back in with ease. Jack was moaning too, hips stuttering a little as their hips met flush. Rhys wrapped his arms around Jack's middle and spread his legs wide, involuntarily arching out of their kiss as Jack picked up a breakneck pace.

"O-Oh my *god*," Rhys moaned, fingernails digging into Jack's back. That seemed to spur the older man on, each snap of his hips starting to rock Rhys' body farther and farther up the bed. Rhys pried his cybernetic hand from Jack's back so he wouldn't seriously hurt him, instead using it to press flat against the wall behind him to steady himself.

"Come on, baby, *come for me*," Jack murmured against his ear, nibbling at the lobe. He reached a hand down between them to grasp Rhys' cock, smearing the precum at the head to slick the friction.

Rhys came undone instantly, back arching as he cried out with his release. His nails raked a long, sharp arc down Jack's spine and across his ribs, leaving a stinging sensation in their wake. That was enough to throw Jack over the edge, his thrusts turning frantic as he groaned in Rhys' ear and spilled inside of him.

Both men were panting loudly as they came down from their orgasms. Rhys grunted as Jack sagged his weight down onto him, their bodies tacky with sweat and Rhys' cum between them. The slimmer man shifted around a little to get more comfortable, or rather so Jack wasn't crushing his diaphragm as much so he could actually breathe. Rhys' thighs were trembling on either side of Jack's hips and Rhys couldn't stop the way his heart fluttered when Jack reached down to stroke a hand over one.

They laid like that for a while even though they were both hot and uncomfortable. Rhys moved his cybernetic hand into Jack's hair and couldn't help but smile when Jack grumble happily as Rhys massaged his scalp. Eventually, when neither man could take it anymore, Jack eased his way off of Rhys with a couple pained grunts that had Rhys chuckling.

Jack narrowed his eyes and poked an accusing finger into Rhys' chest. "What's so funny, huh?"

Rhys covered his mouth with his flesh hand to help stifle his giggles, waving the robotic one dismissively. "Nothing, nothing," Jack's glare hardened, urging Rhys to explain, "you just sound like an old man."

Rhys squeaked when Jack slapped his thigh hard, huffing as he rubbed at the reddening skin. "I'm pretty sure an old man couldn't fuck like *that*," Jack said triumphantly, moving off the bed to grab a random piece of clothing off the floor to wipe himself clean. Jack tossed Rhys the shirt before raising his arms above his head to stretch. Rhys pouted as he wiped himself clean, not happy that Jack was leaving him to clean up the mess *again*.

Jack quirked an eyebrow when he saw the look on Rhys' face and place a knee on the bed so he could lean over the younger man. "Why so pouty, pumpkin?" Jack placed a kiss to Rhys' puckered lip, to which Rhys sucked it back in in a very dignified manner. "Does someone like a little aftercare?" Jack's tone was teasing, but Rhys let him pry the shirt from his fingers so he could finish

cleaning him up.

“It’s the polite thing to do, *Jack*,” Rhys tried not to sound too whiney, whimpering when Jack started cleaning his over-sensitive cock. Jack placed a soft kiss to Rhys’ neck, then to his collarbone, before he brought the kisses back to his lips.

“Hmm, you’re right, where are my manners?” Rhys’ head was swimming from the soft smile Jack gave him. Heterochromatic eyes gazed down at him half-lidded, lips pulled in an easy, genuine way. Rhys felt so... In *love*, even after everything Jack had done to him. It was almost just as painful as it was delightful.

Rhys reached his flesh hand up to cup the side of Jack’s face and Jack brushed the tips of their noses together. Rhys’ heart was hammering in his chest, gut twisted with butterflies. Jack really *was* handsome, deserved the title more than anyone else Rhys had ever laid eyes on. Especially now, with his eyes creasing at the corners with what Rhys could only describe as happiness, his face relaxed and tender in a way Rhys liked to think he only got to see. He wished he could see it without the mask, wondered what masterpiece lay beneath.

Rhys craned his neck up so he could kiss the older man and Jack cupped a hand at the back of his head to hold him there. It was chaste, just a simple press so they could just feel each other. Rhys felt like he was having *deja-vu*, only this time he hoped things went much differently afterwards. When they parted they gazed at each other longingly even though neither of them were going anywhere.

“M hungry,” Rhys broke the silence, grinning as Jack chuckled at him.

“Worked up an appetite?”

Rhys nodded and gave Jack another tender kiss before he was pushing the larger man by the shoulder so they could get up. Rhys pulled on his underwear (which had knocked over the empty bottle of whiskey he’d been nursing over the past few weeks) and lead Jack back to the kitchen, who had opted to stay pants-less.

Rhys fished around the kitchen while Jack plastered himself against his back with arms around slim hips. Rhys tried not to think about how domestic it felt, having Jack hold him in his kitchen while he kissed at his neck like they were in their honeymoon phase. Jack ended up picking their snack, a half-eaten bag of chips that were kind of stale but they both still enjoyed in silence. Rhys sat on one of the stools at the small island in the middle of the kitchen while Jack stood on the other side leaning on his elbows. Rhys would take a handful of chips before tilting the bag towards Jack so he could take some as well.

They finished the bag and Rhys licked the crumbs off of Jack’s fingers. They shared a sour cream and onion-flavored kiss and a glass of water before making their way back into bed, Rhys happily assuming the position of little spoon while Jack pulled the covers up over them. Rhys was just on the cusp of sleep when Jack nuzzled into his hair and took in a deep breath.

“You awake, Rhysie?” Jack whispered, placing a kiss to the top of his head. Rhys hummed a tired affirmative and wiggled his way closer to Jack.

“... I’m sorry, y’know.”

Rhys blinked his eyes open tiredly, staring into the darkness. He was unsure if he was even awake at that point, surely he had to be dreaming. Jack wasn’t an apologetic person, mostly because he didn’t think he ever did anything wrong, and even if he *did* think he might have done something wrong he’d never admit it. If he hadn’t been so tired he might have had something to say but between the

gravity of the situation and the exhaustion muddling his brain he couldn't come up with anything.

"You gonna leave me hangin', babe?" Jack murmured into his hair and squeezed Rhys closer to him. If Rhys wasn't so tired he might have been able to feel Jack's heart pounding against his back.

Rhys shuffled around until he was facing Jack, hands flat against the older man's chest and legs tangled together. He looked at Jack as best he could through the darkness and kissed the corner of his lips.

"Is this a dream?" Rhys mumbled, struggling to keep his eyes open. Jack chuckled and placed a kiss on Rhys' forehead.

"No... No, it's not... Just a real, genuine Handsome Jack apology for ya. Whaddaya say?"

Rhys smiled a delirious smile and nosed at Jack's cheek. "Mmm... I forgive you... But 'm still a lil mad. I think tha's fair." Jack chuckled again and nodded.

"Yeah, that's fair, Rhysie."

## Chapter End Notes

A real apology?? From Handsome Jack????? Rhys, count your luck starts, boi.

P.S. I'm thinking about doing a babysitter AU once I wrap this story up, what do you guys think?

# Chapter 14

## Chapter Summary

Vaughn comes home to a disturbing sight and Rhys has to deal with it. Oh, and Vasquez is an asshole.

## Chapter Notes

Soooo I wasn't originally going to post a chapter today but then I said fuck it and did it anyway! Enjoy :)

y'all can find me on twitter @rhackbitch btw

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Rhys woke up to the sound of screams. Specifically, Vaughn's screams.

Rhys jerked awake and scrambled out of bed so fast his legs got tangled in the sheets. He fell to the floor with a loud thud and a curse as he tried to pry the offending fabric from his body. Once he was free he sprinted into the kitchen, thankful that he'd gone to bed with underwear on, otherwise Vaughn would have suffered the sight of his very naked best friends.

"What?! What?!" Rhys shouted as he rounded the corner, only to stop dead in his tracks.

There was Vaughn standing stock-still, gaping at a very naked, very peeved Handsome Jack. Vaughn was white as a ghost, one hand clenching the front of his shirt like he'd just suffered a heart attack. Rhys couldn't really blame him, the poor bro was probably fearing for his life. It wasn't every day you came home from your girlfriend's house to find Handsome Jack glaring at you over a cup of fresh coffee (did he mention the part where Jack was *naked*?)

Jack dragged his gaze over to Rhys, who was now equally as still as Vaughn. He had no idea how to handle this situation. Rhys wasn't sure what he was more shocked at, that last night had even happened or that Jack was *still there*. And Vaughn, oh god, how was he going to explain this? He'd pretty much sworn off of Jack to his friends after weeks of crying and self-loathing, and yet here he was.

"Care to explain why your little nerd friend's screaming this early in the *goddamn* morning?" Jack grumbled over the rim of his mug, which Rhys noted was *black*, gross. He cringed as he watched Jack take a sip.

"Uh...", Rhys muttered dumbly, unsure how to answer that question without giving an obvious answer.

Vaughn abruptly turned to him with wide eyes, speaking through clenched teeth. "Can we talk, *bro*?"

Rhys glanced between Jack and Vaughn a few times before he nodded and grabbed his best friend by the arm. He dragged the shorter man down the hall and into his bedroom, slamming the door behind them.

“Look, I can explain—“

“You better explain! Why is Handsome Jack naked in my kitchen?! I am never going to be able to get that image out of my head.” As if to prove his point Vaughn knocked his glasses up with his knuckles and rubbed at his eyes viciously.

“*Shhh*,” Rhys hushed with an aggravated glare. He wouldn’t put it past Jack to eavesdrop. “I honestly didn’t think he’d still be here this morning.”

“Forget about this morning! Why was he here last night?!” Vaughn was still being too loud and it was making Rhys nervous. He tried to shush his best friend again but Vaughn shushed him right back. “You *shh*! I thought you were done with him?! Are you really that stupid, Rhys?”

Rhys flinched back a little, hurt by the comment. He opened his mouth to speak but Vaughn didn’t give him the chance.

“You realize he’s just going to chew you up and spit you out again, right? He’s an *asshole*, Rhys, why do you keep subjecting yourself to him?” Vaughn let out an irritated sigh and pinched the bridge of his nose. “Oh, not to mention the fact that he beat the crap out of my girlfriend’s dad!”

Rhys narrowed his eyes at that, jaw set tight. “Is *that* why you’re so angry? Because of stupid fucking Cathy?!” Rhys threw his arms up in exasperation.

“I knew it! I knew you didn’t like her!”

“You’re right, I *don’t*! And I don’t have to! You don’t even know *why* Jack beat the crap out of that asshole, maybe he deserved it!”

“Are you *seriously* defending him right now? Do you even hear yourself?!”

Just then the door opened and hit Vaughn in the back, making the smaller man stumble forward into Rhys. They both grunted angrily and pushed away from each other, then turned their gazes to Jack.

“Ooh, sorry, am I interrupting something?” Jack asked, and Vaughn covered his eyes so he didn’t have to see the naked man anymore. Rhys just glared at him for the obvious question.

“Remember that creepy stalker guy I so graciously saved you from last night?” Jack asked casually as he picked up his sweatpants and pulled them on, sick of seeing Vaughn cower from the sight of a real man.

“Wait, what?” Vaughn said meekly, finally uncovering his eyes to look over at Rhys, confused.

“Yeah, what about him?” Vaughn looked on incredulously, unsure how they could both be so casual about this.

“Someone was *stalking* you?!”

“Well, turns out he wasn’t a stalker. Not *just* a stalker, anyway. Congratulations, Rhysie! You had your first hit put out on you!”

“What?!” Both men shouted in unison, and it might have been comical had it not been such a grave

situation. Jack seemed to still find it funny, though, laughing right in their faces.

“Jack, what are you talking about? That guy was a *hitman*?” Rhys asked, slapping the larger man on the arm when he wouldn’t stop laughing.

“Ow! Alright, alright, I get it, not funny,” Jack said through the last trembles of his laughter, “but yeah, exactly that.” He shot a finger gun at Rhys, who was now white as a ghost. “Had my guys interrogate him after they picked him up last night, said he was hired by...,” Jack trailed off as he tapped on the screen of his ECHOcomm watch, squinting as he read over the name, “Cecelia Baumgartner, stupid ass name.” Jack looked up from his watch just as Vaughn collapsed to the ground.

Rhys jumped in surprise before he knelt down next to his friend and rolled him onto his back.

“What’s wrong with *him*?” Jack asked, nudging the smaller man with his foot.

Rhys slapped at his leg and Vaughn groaned as he slowly blinked back to consciousness. “Vaughn, bro, you all right?” Rhys fanned Vaughn with his hand rapidly.

“—’s mmm-om,” Vaughn mumbled incoherently. Jack crouched down on the other side of him, grabbed him by the shoulder, and shook him.

“Can’t understand you, short stuff. Speak up, mmkay?”

“Stop shaking him, Jack!”

“Cathy’s...,” Vaughn started again, blinking some more delirium away before he finally collected himself, “Cecelia’s... Cathy’s mom...”

Jack and Rhys looked at each other, then back down at Vaughn. Before Rhys could react Jack was gripping the front of Vaughn’s shirt and lifting him to his feet with a harsh jerk of his arm. He lifted Vaughn so he was dangling in his grasp, Jack snarling up at him.

“Jack, put him down!” Rhys shouted, tugging at Jack’s arm. Jack fought him for a moment before he let Vaughn go, and Rhys had to help catch the smaller man so he didn’t crash to the ground again. Rhys moved Vaughn over to the bed and sat him down, blushing as Jack took a defensive step between them even though Vaughn wasn’t the threat here.

“Vaughn, that doesn’t make sense. Why would Cathy’s mom—,” and then it dawned on him. *Martin*. A cold chill ran down his spine. Martin must have finally come clean about what happened to his wife and now she wanted revenge. It didn’t take a genius to figure what Martin probably didn’t tell the most honest story.

Rhys reached a hand up to grab Jack’s bicep to pull him to the side. Vaughn was still a little too dazed from fainting to pay them much mind. Rhys looked up at Jack with fearful eyes, though some of that fear was soothed by the hand that Jack placed on the back of his neck reassuringly.

“Jack, that means...,” Rhys trailed off, worrying at his bottom lip with his teeth. Everything was finally coming to a head. Vaughn was going to find out what Rhys did, and in turn why that made Jack do what he did, and to top it all off his best friend’s girlfriend’s parents were trying to have him killed. He felt like he was going to hyperventilate. When had he started gasping for air like that?

“Calm down, Rhysie, it’s alright,” Jack said softly, his other hand petting at Rhys’ hair, “I’ve got it under control, Jack’ll take care of it.” Jack flashed him a toothy grin which got Rhys to smile back a little. “You trust me?”



Before Rhys could even really think about his response he was nodding, and that made Jack grin wider. Trust was the last thing he should have for Jack, but for some reason he really believed he should trust him. Jack gave him a kiss to the cheek and then to the lips before he spun back around to face Vaughn.

“Hey, kiddo,” Jack said as he snapped his fingers in front of Vaughn’s face and slapped him on the cheek, “time to wake up.” Vaughn grunted and tried to push the assaulting hands away to no avail. “You ready for the cliff notes version or are ya gonna pass out again?”

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When Jack started explaining everything Rhys felt his gut twist nervously. All he could think about was Vaughn hating him after he found out the truth, hating him for lying, hating him for almost sleeping with his girlfriend’s dad, almost getting his girlfriend’s dad killed... The list was pretty long, honestly. But he’d told Jack he’d trust him and, well, he kind of had to stick to that now. Plus, Vaughn had to find out somehow and honestly Rhys was just enough of a coward to have Jack retell it all so he didn’t have to.

Jack’s retelling was... Exaggerated, obviously. And graphic, very graphic. Vaughn looked like he was going to vomit when Jack gave a very graphic description on what exactly he did to Martin and the hitman, and Rhys didn’t blame him, there were *way* too many details.

Despite himself, Rhys couldn’t help but smile as he watched Jack ramble on. He was so animated, waving his hands around as he spoke, his expressions as dramatic as ever. It was almost like watching a play where Jack was the only actor playing every character in the story. Rhys couldn’t help but find it comical and endearing as all hell. If he had to choose a word to describe himself it would most definitely be whipped, which was pretty upsetting because that was supposed to go the other way around.

Once Jack finished his animated re-telling Rhys brought his gaze to Vaughn. This was it, this was where Vaughn disowned him and moved out with Cathy (yuck). The silence that filled the room was unsettling after all the talking Jack had just done. Rhys was suddenly hyper-fixated on the fact that he was only wearing underwear, which made the whole situation that much more awkward. Finally, Vaughn’s confused stare left Jack to bestow itself upon Rhys, and the cybernetic man swallowed nervously. Jack’s hand warm between his shoulder blades did not go unnoticed.

“I have one question,” Vaughn finally spoke, holding up his index finger, “*why* didn’t you tell me any of this sooner, bro?”

Rhys felt relief wash over him because although Vaughn sounded mildly irritated he definitely didn’t seem angry. He could feel Jack’s expectant gaze boring into the side of his face but he chose to ignore it. Instead, he decided to open and close his mouth a few times like a gaping fish as he tried to form his thoughts into words. He could think of a million reasons why he didn’t tell Vaughn, but they all seemed so stupid now.

“*That’s* your one question, dum dum?” Came Jack’s voice, startling Rhys out of his trance. “Seriously, that’s it? Not, ‘wow Jack, how are you so awesome? You totally saved my best friend!’ Or how about ‘hey Jack, how do I get to be as cool as you?’ I could keep going, do you want me to keep going?”

Rhys glared at Jack out of the corner of his eye, all that endearment from earlier washing away with all the grace of a cold shower. “I *promise* you, Jack, nobody wants you to keep going.” Jack just shrugged nonchalantly and crossed his arms over his chest, as if to say, ‘*your loss.*’ The older man flopped down into the rolling chair situated at Rhys’ desk and kicked his feet up on it.

Rhys turned his attention back to Vaughn and took a deep breath, scrubbing at his face with the palm of his flesh hand. "I thought you'd hate me," Rhys mumbled and took a seat on the bed next to Vaughn, "I mean, *I* hated me, so I thought for sure you'd definitely hate me."

Vaughn clapped a hand onto Rhys' upper arm and gave the taller man a knowing look. "What I hate you for is letting me sit on this bed. Please tell me you didn't have sex on this bed." Rhys' dark blush and Jack's loud cackle of laughter was enough of an answer for Vaughn. He stood from the bed abruptly and tried really hard not to think of all the disgusting things he might have touched.

"Look, Rhys, you're my best friend. Sure, you make some *questionable* choices," Vaughn discreetly pointed a thumb over at Jack, making sure the CEO couldn't see, "but it's not like you *knew* who Martin was, and it's not your fault he was planning on... Doing whatever he was planning on doing and mouthed off to the wrong guy. He's the dick, not you, I'm gonna go burn my clothes now."

Vaughn made a move towards the door but Rhys stood and pulled him into a hug before he could go anywhere. Vaughn returned it with a smile and when they pulled apart Rhys held up his fist and raised an eyebrow in silent query. Vaughn mimicked the gesture and the two bumped fists.

"Bro's for life?" Rhys asked, seeming to forget who was sharing the room with them.

"Bro's for life. But seriously, I'm burning these clothes and you're replacing them." The pair shared a grin before Vaughn left, and Rhys knew that whatever other details they needed to hash out would be handled later. He just hoped Vaughn burned his clothes *outside* of the apartment.

Jack's boisterous laughter had Rhys jumping out of his skin and honestly that happened far too often for his liking. He looked over to the older man, Jack leaning back in his chair with a hand on his chest and the other on his stomach, head tipped back as he laughed up at the ceiling.

"That... That wasn't real, was it?" Jack asked through fits of laughter, dodging the pillow Rhys threw at him. "Watch it, bro." Jack laughed even harder at his own joke, this time catching the second pillow Rhys threw at him so he could throw it right back in the other man's face as he charged at him. Rhys let out a soft '*oof*' but didn't stop his gait, shoving the pillow in Jack's face as he pounced on him in hopes of stifling his laughter.

Jack caught him easily and pushed the pillow away in one motion, and man did he love how cute Rhys looked all pissy and fuming. "Come on, *bro*, don't be like that," Jack teased, wiggling his fingers where they were holding at Rhys' sides, making the man squirm. Rhys slapped at Jack's arms as he tried to get away, trying desperately to will the heat from his cheeks.

"You are *such* an asshole," Rhys whined, pinching at the soft skin of Jack's underarm when he tried tickling him again. Jack hissed and ceased his advances, and Rhys carefully tucked away the information that pinching was Jack's weakness. Rhys pinched him again for good measure, this time earning a curse from the older man.

"Fuck! Okay, okay, I stopped!" Jack shouted, pulling Rhys closer to his chest so his arms were squished between them where he couldn't use them. Rhys craned his neck so he could smile up at Jack innocently, and if Jack's stomach did flips then that was *nobody's* business.

Rhys placed a soft kiss to the underside of Jack's jaw and then nosed at the spot, suddenly feeling so light and airy. With good reason, too. He'd gotten a huge secret off his chest, him and Jack were (practically) made-up, and Jack was going to (hopefully) solve all of his problems. When Rhys met Jack's gaze again he suddenly felt like all of Helios and Pandora and even Elpis revolved around him. The look in Jack's eyes was so tender, the lines of his face softer than Rhys had ever seen them. Jack looked like he was *glowing*, heterochromatic eyes bright as he watched Rhys.

All that charisma that Jack was known for seemed to be pouring out of the man but with such genuine feeling that Rhys felt like he was vibrating from the energy Jack was letting off. And all that was fixated on *him*. Rhys suddenly went from feeling like the most important thing in the galaxy to the most insignificant. Surely he wasn't deserving of all *that*. Rhys was lost in the sparkle of Jack's eyes, like he was staring into the cosmos and all the answers to life. Handsome Jack was a goddamn *phenomenon*.

Jack placed a soft kiss to Rhys' cheek, just below his ECHOeye, and Rhys felt his eyes flutter closed. Then Jack was kissing him on the lips, warm and smooth like honey. Rhys wanted to eat every last drop, hungry for the saccharine moment. Jack cupped a hand at the back of his head, thick fingers weaving into his hair. Rhys felt like, if Helios crashed to the ground at that moment, he wouldn't really care.

Naturally, just as Rhys leaned up to press deeper into the kiss his ECHOcomm started buzzing and playing a loud tune. Both men jumped at the sound, causing Rhys to headbutt Jack right in the nose.

"Son of a *taint*," Jack cursed, cupping his hand over his nose with a pained sound.

"I'm sorry! Oh my god, I'm so sorry!" Rhys put his hand over top of Jack's, giving him an apologetic smile as he slipped off of his lap and over to his ECHOcomm. He quickly turned the alarm off as he idly rubbed at the spot on his forehead that hit Jack in the nose. When he turned back to Jack he was still cupping his nose, elbows resting on his knees as he bent over in the chair.

"Are you okay?! I'm *so* sorry. I-I can get you some ice!" Rhys rushed back over to Jack, who was glaring up at him with no real malice, mostly just out of pain.

"I'll take some tissues," Jack said, voice nasally, "ya got me good, princess."

Rhys finally saw the blood between Jack's fingers where he was trying to keep it from getting all over the place. The younger man suddenly felt queasy, head starting to spin. He could feel the color drain from his face because *oh my god so much blood* and Jack must have noticed, too, if the look on his face was anything to go by.

"I mean it's either stand there and watch me bleed *more* or get me something to stop it," Jack said bluntly, reaching a hand out in anticipation.

"Yup, got it, sorry." Rhys ran down the hall into the bathroom and pulled a washcloth from the linen closet. When he returned Jack snatched it and replaced his hand with it, tilting his head back.

"Wait, wait, wait, don't do that!" Rhys said quickly, gagging as he saw a thick drop of blood slide down Jack's chin. Jack looked like he could give two shits about Rhys' advice but Rhys reached forward and maneuvered Jack's head where it was supposed to be. "It'll just drip down your throat if you do that. Pinch here."

Jack hissed when Rhys pinched the tender skin at the bridge of his nose, but thankfully it didn't hurt enough that he could tell it was broken. Jack let Rhys hold the position, it was the least he could do. The older man leaned back in the chair and Rhys followed, keeping a steady pressure.

"I'm really sorry, totally my fault," Rhys said with a sheepish grin and Jack just rolled his eyes.

"Yeah, no shit it's your fault. Now stop apologizin'."

Rhys opened his mouth to apologize, again, but thought better of it and snapped his mouth shut. It wasn't long before Rhys started giggling at the ridiculousness of the situation. Jack's glare didn't stop him, nor did the flick to his hip. Soon enough Jack was chuckling too. Once their laughter quieted

down Rhys reached for one of Jack's hands and brought it up to replace where he'd been pinching at his nose.

"I gotta get ready for work. *Normally* that alarm wakes me up, not Vaughn's screams of terror." Jack grinned in a way that Rhys could only describe as triumphant.

"I impress myself sometimes."

Rhys rolled his eyes and left the room, but not without Jack providing a fleeting slap of his ass.

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Jack *obviously* joined him in the shower. Rhys was just grateful he was polite enough to press a hand to his mouth so Vaughn didn't have to suffer through the sounds Jack worked out of him as he fucked him up against the tiled wall. Needless to say, Rhys' legs were Jell-o as he walked to work that morning.

Rhys was prepared to have a good day after that. All things considered, his morning had gone well. It was stressful and more than eventful, but everything seemed to be working in his favor. Okay, maybe he was ignoring the part where he definitely needed to have a talk with Jack about what was going on between them and that Rhys would *not* be okay if Jack kept tossing him around like a hacky sack (that part of him was very, very worried). But for now he was blissful, still thrumming with the aftermath of an orgasm and resolved tension.

That was, until he sat down at his desk only to feel a shrouding presence behind him. Rhys glanced over as a hip leaned against his desk *much* too close. The smell of expired cologne was enough to give away who it was and Rhys didn't even bother looking up to double check. His giddy mood was instantly squashed, a glare settling onto his face as he turned on his holo-screen.

"*Rhys*, my man," Vasquez cooed in a way that made Rhys' hair stand on end.

"Vasquez." Rhys' tone was flat, unmoved as he started scrolling through his emails. Vasquez barked a laugh much too loud, he *really* needed coffee to handle such an insufferable shit stain.

"How ya been, buddy? Thought I'd come check in on my *favorite* co-worker, see what's *new*." It wasn't unlike Hugo to be sarcastically chummy but this was a little much. Rhys flinched when he felt Hugo's tacky gold pinky press into his neck, rolling his chair to the other side of his cubicle and away from the prodding finger. Did he have a bruise on his neck? It felt like he had a— *oh*, right.

"What do you want, Vasquez? I'm *busy*."

"Right, right, I'll just cut to the chase." Vasquez pulled out his ECHOcomm and started tapping at it, seemingly searching for something. "Y'know, I've been browsing the ECHOnet, as I do, trying to find the next big craze. Social media, all that jazz. And wouldn't you know! Good ol' *Rhys* beat me to it."

Rhys paled as the ECHOcomm was turned to him, revealing his *stupidly* public sugar baby account. His stomach dropped with a wave of nausea, mouth falling open gracelessly. This was not what he needed right now, or ever, really. Hugo was the *last* person he needed finding any kind of dirt on him. Rhys quickly shut his mouth so he didn't further embarrass himself, bravely meeting Vasquez's smug gaze.

"Look familiar?"

Rhys hardened his glare even though he felt like he was going to pass out. "*What* do you *want*,

Vasquez?” He repeated the question, this time with more venom and a little more crack in his voice. His mouth felt so *dry*.

“Oh, not much. Just for you to remove your name from the list of candidates applying for Henderson’s job accompanied by a *riveting* letter of recommendation for your’s truly.” Vasquez returned the ECHOcomm to his pocket and shot Rhys with double finger guns. “And your resignation, while we’re at it.”

“*What?!*” Rhys was definitely being way too loud, the monotonous drone of fingers on keyboards and clicking of pens halting momentarily at the outburst. He decided to continue with whisper-shouting. “Are you out of your *mind*? Like hell I’m gonna do that!”

Vasquez tutted at him like he was a child. “It’s a graceful way to go, really. It’s that or everyone finds out you slept your way to the top. Wait, wait, let me rephrase. Slept your way to the *middle*, because you can’t even get halfway there decently.”

“I didn’t—,” Rhys cut himself off with an undignified noise and slapped Hugo’s hand away when he reached to place it on his shoulder.

“Hey, I’m doing you a *favor*, Rhys. How about I let you mull it over, hmm?”

Rhys was going to fucking *explode*.

## Chapter End Notes

ahhh, some good ol' blackmail. what a scumbag.

# Chapter 15

## Chapter Summary

Vasquez gets what's coming to him and Rhys finally brings up 'the talk.'

## Chapter Notes

I brought my laptop to work just so I could post this chapter because I knew I wouldn't get the chance when I got home and I love you guys!!! So here it is, enjoy :)

catch me on twitter: @rhackbitch

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Rhys paced in front of Jack's desk as he ranted, throwing his hands around dramatically as he spoke. Jack didn't really seem like he was paying attention, focused on something on his computer, but Rhys didn't really care. He was just venting, he didn't really need any input from anybody. So he took to cursing up a storm, explaining everything that had taken place earlier that day while his uneaten lunch cooled on Jack's desk. Jack had eaten all of his so fast Rhys was surprised he hadn't choked.

Yvette was the one to cancel their lunch plans that day, said she was too busy and had to work through lunch. Rhys was still too antsy about having to finish his talk with Vaughn so he lied and said he was too busy, also, and instead brought lunch up to Jack's office. He'd been surprised when Meg directed him to Jack's office with a smile and no questions asked, like she knew something he didn't. Meg always had that kind of air about her, he swore she was some kind of oracle or something. So there he was, complaining about his shit morning to Jack, while the older man burped from eating his lunch *way* too fast.

"And you know what that asshole said he wanted to keep quiet?" Rhys asked incredulously, turning to Jack for the first time with an actual prompt. Jack didn't seem to notice at first, face casual as he continued typing something. The silence from Rhys' end must have caught his attention, however, his typing halting for a moment so he could glance at the furious man in front of his desk before he continued doing whatever he was doing.

"Hmm?" It was an obligatory response, but it was enough to encourage Rhys to continue.

"He said he wanted me to *resign*. Not only that, but he wants me to write him a letter of recommendation for a job *I* deserve!" Rhys let out a frustrated shout and ran his hands through his hair. "He said he was going to tell everyone that I slept my way to where I am." That got Jack's attention, narrowed eyes falling on Rhys as if to say, '*you better not have.*' Jealous was a good look on Jack.

"I earned this job, damn it! It sucks and it doesn't pay well but I *earned* it. Do you have any idea how much student debt I have?! All the *unpaid* hours of overtime I've worked?! If anyone schmoozed their way to get where they are it's Vasquez, not me." Rhys crossed his arms over his

chest with a pout, and he only pouted harder when Jack smirked, attention back on his screen.

“Are you even listening?” Rhys asked, irritated.

“Yeah, yeah, I got it all, pumpkin,” Jack said with a dismissive wave of his hand, “what’d you say this skag sucker’s name was? Assquez?” Rhys snorted at that.

“*Vasquez*. Hugo Vasquez,” Rhys made an undignified choking sound, “such a grease ball of a human being. Like, he literally looks like he rolls around in grease every morning. It’s disgusting.”

Jack’s eyes narrowed as he leaned closer to his screen, scrolling through something Rhys couldn’t see from the opposite side of the desk. Jack looked like he was in thought, trying to remember something long forgotten. Rhys leaned forward, placing his hands on Jack’s desk to brace himself so he could peek at the screen.

“*Where* do I know this guy from?” Jack muttered, definitely to himself but Rhys strained his ears to hear. Jack started tapping at the clasp on his chin as he leaned back in his gaudy yellow chair. Rhys had finally leaned over the desk far enough to see what Jack was looking at, frowning when he saw it was Hugo’s personal Hyperion file.

“Yup, that’s him. Isn’t he so *greasy*?”

Jack ignored him, instead reaching forward to put his hand over the top of Vasquez’s head, covering his hair in the picture. Then his face lit up, and Rhys swore he could see the lightbulb turn on like Jack was in a cartoon. Unsurprisingly, Jack started laughing, because most of Jack’s emotions were anger or laughing at other people’s misery. Rhys pushed himself off the desk so he was standing normally again, patiently waiting out Jack’s little fit.

Rhys was staring at Jack with the most unimpressed look he could muster when the older man finally calmed down, rather impatiently waiting for him to elaborate.

“You’re letting ol’ *Wallet Head* get one over on you? *That* is great, kiddo.” Rhys was really getting sick of Jack being so goddamn cryptic. Couldn’t he ever just *explain* something without Rhys having to pull it out of him?

“Mmkay, glad you’re having a good time, but what the hell is a ‘Wallet Head’?” Jack gestured for Rhys to come around to the other side of the desk and the younger man complied. Jack was quick to pull Rhys into his lap once he rounded the corner, making Rhys let out a surprised squeak.

“*This* guy, Rhysie, is a Wallet Head,” Jack explained, though it didn’t really clear anything up. The CEO reached forward to tilt the screen towards them a little more while his other arm snaked around Rhys’ waist. Jack had his chin on Rhys’ shoulder, and Jack’s warmth at his back helped soothe his bad mood.

“You see, Hugo here used to work down in the mail rooms back before yours truly became the best damn CEO this company has ever seen,” Rhys scoffed, because of course Jack would find an opportunity to compliment himself, “used to see him from time to time, pathetic excuse for a human being. He must have paid a *lot* of money to get hair plugs like that.”

Rhys quirked an eyebrow and turned his head to look at Jack, blushing at how close they were. “What do you mean? Vasquez was *bald*?” Jack laughed abruptly in his ear, making Rhys flinch away because ow.

“Ohhh yeah, super bald. I used to slap bills on the back of his slimy skull and call him *Wallet Head*. Really upset the guy, pretty sure he cried a few times,” Jack was grinning like he’d just won a prize,

*and Rhys was grinning because he did win a prize. This was absolutely priceless. He was definitely going to use this information to his advantage.*

*“This is perfect, Jack. Vasquez is gonna be sorry he ever threatened me. Is there any way you can dig up old pictures of him? Knowing Vasquez he probably paid to have any evidence of his baldness wiped off of Helios.” Rhys squirmed as Jack started mouthing at his tattoo, a smirk on the older man’s lips.*

*“Ooh, Rhysie, so vengeful. I like it,” Jack purred before he bit the inked skin. Rhys gasped softly and squirmed harder, but Jack held him in place. “Didn’t think you had it in you, cupcake.”*

*“Whatever, Jack,” Rhys said, rolling his eyes.*

*“I could just kill him if you want.” The casualness with which Jack said that was disturbing.*

*“Nope, I’m okay, thanks. One murder is enough for my conscience.” Rhys tried to stand but again, Jack kept him where he was.*

*“But ya gotta admit, Jack takes care of ya,” Jack grinned as he kissed the port on Rhys’ temple, making the younger man shiver, “don’t need friends when you’ve got Jack.”*

*Rhys finally broke free and stood as fast as he could, quickly scurrying to the front of the desk so Jack’s grabby hands couldn’t reach him. “First of all, stop talking in the third person, it’s weird. Second, not even gonna try and figure out what that meant. I gotta go back to work.”*

*Rhys turned to leave but Jack grabbed him by the wrist and stood from his chair. Rhys turned, confused, only to have Jack pull him across the desk into a tender kiss. Oh yeah, Rhys liked that. The younger man hummed into the kiss and parted his lips at the smooth swipe of Jack’s tongue. Their tongues met once between them, and Rhys couldn’t help but notice that Jack tasted like spicy noodles from lunch. When they parted Rhys was blushing and Jack was grinning, and wasn’t that just a testament to who they were as people.*

*“Go get ‘em, tiger.”*

—

*When Rhys returned to work Vasquez was waiting for him at his desk, fiddling with what was definitely a Handsome Jack Rubik’s cube. Sometimes he forgot that Vasquez was probably even more of a Handsome Jack fanboy than Rhys was, maybe he could get Jack to personally insult him or something. Yeah, that would crush his hopes and dreams. Was that too harsh?*

*“There he is! How was lunch?” Normally, just the sound of Hugo’s smarmy voice would have ticked Rhys off, but right now he was feeling great.*

*“It was good, thanks for asking.” Rhys shot the other man an insincere smile as he sat down at his desk and kicked his feet up on a nearby filing cabinet. He could tell Hugo was put-off by his nonchalant behavior and that made everything all the more sweet.*

*Hugo tried to recollect himself, taking on his over-confident facade once more. “You come to a decision yet?”*

*Rhys looked thoughtful for a moment, reaching forward to snatch the toy from Vasquez’s hands so he could start fiddling with it, flicking the pieces around rhythmically. “I did a lot of thinking, you really drive a hard bargain, you know that? I started going over the possibilities in my head. What would happen if I resigned? Probably have to get a job in a different department, make even less*



*than I do now, lose all my dignity because I know I gave in to you.”*

*Rhys glanced up at Vasquez, his mustache quirked in confusion. Rhys could tell he was wondering what exactly he thought he had up his sleeve.*

*“Or, what if I didn’t give in? Lose my job, probably. Public humiliation, definitely. But then I started to realize that neither of these options gave me the upper hand. So I did some research, can’t go down without a fight. Ain’t that right, Wallet Head?” Bingo! Buzz word! Just as Rhys finished talking he solved the Rubik’s cube, 99 little Jack’s grinning up at him in victory. (It wasn’t that impressive, he just had the pattern memorized.)*

*Rhys finally looked up at Hugo, that smug look wiped right off his face, replaced with what Rhys could only describe as mortification. Just then his ECHOeye alerted him of a message, and he pulled up his palm-comp to review it. It was a photo from Jack followed by a winking kissy face emoji.*

*“Perfect timing!” Rhys turned the photo towards Vasquez, making the older man stare into his own, very bald face. From what Rhys could tell it was Hugo’s old Hyperion identification photo, which would explain how Jack got it. Even if Vasquez paid a lot of money to wipe his bald existence off of Helios he definitely didn’t have enough to access Handsome Jack’s personal files.*

*“Wh— How did you—,” Vasquez stammered, unable to look away from the photo. Rhys really wished he’d look at him, though, just so he could see the triumphant grin on his face.*

*“This is how this is gonna go,” Rhys said, using his ECHOeye to cue up an email chain to everyone in their team with the photo of Vasquez right smack dab in the middle, “either you forget you ever threatened me in the first place, or I send this picture to everyone you know. Hell, I’ll even pay for advertising space in the Hub just to plaster your ugly mug on it. If you’re lucky maybe Handsome Jack will see it! You’ll be famous!”*

*Hugo scrambled for his ECHOcomm and Rhys just watched in amusement. “Not if I spread your dirt, first! Wait... What the hell, where is it?!” Rhys quirked an eyebrow as Hugo desperately tapped at his phone. “How— How did you delete it?! I paid someone a lot of money to make sure you couldn’t get back into that account!”*

*Rhys shrugged very honestly, he actually had no idea how his account had gotten deleted. Well, he had an idea, one that started with J and rhymed with rakk. He almost felt like he owed Jack for the past couple of days but this didn’t even come close to making up for... Yeah, Rhys was still trying not to think about that.*

*“So what’s it gonna be, Wallet Head?” Rhys asked cynically as he hovered over the ‘send’ button on the email. Vasquez went from looking horrified, to defeated, to angry in a quick flash. It was anger that stuck on his face, of course, his glare sharp as a knife. Oh, if looks could kill.*

*“This isn’t over, Rhys.”*

*“Really? I get the feeling that it is.” Rhys closed his fist to shut his palm-comp off and turned back to his desk as Hugo walked over dejectedly. Rhys had a feeling it probably wasn’t over, it never was with Hugo, but he could settle for this right now. Once he was sure Hugo was gone he pulled his messages up again and used his ECHOeye to send a text.*

*>>did you delete my sugar baby account?*

*The reply took long enough that Rhys had forgotten to be anxious about the response, but when it*

*did come he couldn't help but smile.*

*>yea figured wallet head was gonna try 2 use it against u*

*>not like u need it anymore*

—

*Jack was pretty sure he'd gotten off scot free after about a week. He'd apologized (not something to be taken lightly), literally saved Rhys' life (again), was the barer of bad news to that dweeby accountant (Vaughn, not that he cared), and helped Rhys dodge a (metaphorical this time) bullet by humiliating his nemesis. That warranted a free pass in Jack's book. I'd forgive me, Jack thought smugly.*

*But nope, apparently none of that was good enough. Rhys needed to talk about his feelings or whatever even though Jack was plenty happy sweeping it under the carpet and continuing on with their lives. What the hell else was he supposed to do to earn the younger man's forgiveness? Get on his knees and beg? Not gonna happen. Not now, not ever, not for anyone. Handsome Jack didn't grovel.*

*Maybe Rhys just needed Jack to listen, which he was totally capable of doing. For some obnoxious reason he hung onto every word the little nerd said anyway, he could let the kid chew his ear off some more. Unsurprisingly, Jack was forgetting the part where 'talking' included two mouths, not one. Jack just wasn't a talker— Okay, maybe he needed to rephrase that, because Jack was definitely a talker. In fact, Jack had heard more than one person say they didn't know anyone who liked talking as much as he did.*

*Jack looked at the message on his watch for what felt like the umpteenth time, frowning at the little letters staring back at him. It had started out innocent enough, with Jack saying:*

*>>hey kitten, what u wearing? ;)*

*That was around nine o'clock that morning. He'd woken up horny as all hell from the aftermath of a very graphic wet dream that involved Rhys and some handcuffs and lots and lots of begging. Jack had finally come to terms with the fact that most (all) of his sexual fantasies revolved around Rhys and usually he'd just jack one off in the shower to help right his mind for the rest of the work day, but that hadn't been enough that morning. He'd been horny all day, unable to rid his mind of the images of Rhys edging him until he couldn't see straight anymore. So what did Jack do? Try to sext him, of course.*

*>work clothes. because I'm at work.*

*Rhys' reply had been lackluster, to say the least. Again, usually he would just send Meg to bring Rhys up to his office so he could pound his sexual frustration into the younger man, but he was far too swamped with work to even consider taking a quickie break. Too horny or too busy, he wasn't sure which, to come up with anything else to say, Jack had just sunk himself back into his work. It wasn't until lunch time that Rhys had sent him another message that had Jack frowning, but for a completely different reason than he was now.*

*>lunch?*

*>>2 busy 2day, pumpkin*

*>oh, ok :(*

*Jack had figured that was the end of it, Rhys usually just made plans with the dweeb and that shark*

*of a woman he always hung out with if the CEO was too busy. But then Rhys texted him again, this time a little after five when he must have been getting out of work.*

*>can you come over?*

*>>don't think i'll b out anytime soon*

*>that's ok, just let me know when you're free?*

*>>not 2night rhysie*

*>please? we need to talk...*

*And that's where Jack had left the conversation in limbo. He knew what kind of 'talk' Rhys meant and he was not ready for it. He didn't think he was ever going to be ready for it, honestly. He knew he fucked up but he really didn't know what else he could do to make the situation right. He'd already gone way out of his way to dazzle the kid, and even that had been out of his comfort zone due to the guilt following him around like a shadow. Jack wasn't used to feeling guilty, he never really thought twice about any of the decisions he made. But Rhys had a way of nudging himself right into Jack's subconscious to the point where subconscious became every waking conscious thought in Jack's mind.*

*It's not like Jack didn't see this coming, he was just hoping he could put it off longer. Or maybe forever, he was pretty good at distracting Rhys when it came down to it. This persistence, though, Jack knew was no good; at least, not for him. That didn't mean he wasn't going to try, though; and by try he meant try distracting Rhys out of the conversation, not try and be constructive with their... Whatever this was.*

*That thought brought on a whole new wave of anxiety Jack wasn't used to. Was Rhys going to try and have that talk? Try to define their relationship? Could it even be called a relationship? Sure, Rhys had spent the better part of the week having lunch in Jack's office with him and yeah, Jack had spent one (two) nights sneaking into Rhys' apartment through a window like some corny teenage romance movie just so he could watch the younger man struggle to keep quiet (they were being considerate, Rhys didn't want to wake Vaughn up).*

*Did that constitute a relationship? Honestly, Jack had no idea. He wouldn't know a healthy relationship if it slapped him in the face like a thresher tentacle. What would they even call each other? Boyfriends? That was way too gay for him (because fucking another guy in the ass wasn't gayer than calling someone his boyfriend, apparently). Put the whole 'boyfriend' thing aside, though, and Jack was kind of on board. The idea of deeming what he had with Rhys a relationship was scary as all hell, mostly just because Jack tended to completely annihilate things once there was a title on them. Not that he didn't already fuck this up once, because he did, he was just a lucky bastard at this point.*

*Perhaps what was the most nerve-wracking part of all of this was that Jack really, really didn't want to fuck this up again. Even if he was reluctant to admit it, he really did enjoy spending time with Rhys. He was dorky and kind of dumb sometimes and pretty as all hell to look at. Jack liked teasing him just to get a rise, and he liked that Rhys fought back. He liked that a lot, actually, thought the feisty little streak in him was sexy and endearing at the same time.*

*After mulling it over for hours between bouts of work Jack decided Rhys deserved what he was asking for. Jack was a selfish man, but he was at least trying to not put his interests first. He rubbed at his tired eyes as he finally turned off his computer, hissing at the sting it brought. He kept them closed until the throbbing behind his cornea went away only to strain his eyes even further with yet*

*another screen, this time from his watch.*

*>>omw 2 pick u up*

*Jack let the walk to Rhys' apartment drag on a little longer than it needed to, using the time to try and clear his mental space. Unfortunately, that was virtually impossible, each 'solution' to every 'what if' only making him spiral more out of control in his own thoughts. When he finally reached the front door he knocked to the tune of 'Shave and a Haircut.' There was some rusting on the other side of the door, muffled words, and then Rhys standing in front of him looking sleepy but somehow also awake. Jack noted he wasn't wearing the perviously noted work clothes, instead clad in soft sweatpants that hugged those legs and a very familiar looking long sleeve shirt that was suspiciously too big.*

*"Sup, pumpkin?" Jack leaned in to give the younger man a kiss, smiling when Rhys leaned into it and Vaughn made a gagging sound from somewhere in the apartment.*

*"Hey," Rhys responded dazedly, and Jack really loved when he got all flushed like that. "I thought you said you weren't gonna make it?" Rhys cocked his head to one side questioningly, like a curious kitten watching a fly. He had no right to be that cute.*

*"Looks like someone didn't check their messages." Jack poked at the port in Rhys' temple accusingly, making him flinch and swat at the hand. It didn't go unnoticed by Jack that Rhys blinked his ECHOeye alive to sneak a peek at his messages before shutting it off again.*

*"Sorry, we were watching weird Junpai-7 gameshows. Can I make a suggestion?"*

*"No."*

*"Can you please, for the love of god, work on your texting? You sound like a dumb sixteen year-old boy." Jack made an offended face, that was the second time someone had accused him of acting like a teenager in the past six months.*

*"I don't remember asking for your opinion, now come on." Jack motioned for Rhys to step outside the apartment but the younger man just gave him a puzzled look.*

*"I, uh, I thought we would spend the night in?" Rhys was nervous, Jack could tell. He was toying with the hem of his shirt, fiddling with a loose thread there. Jack couldn't help but smirk, Rhys was just too damn cute, fidgeting in the doorway; who was acting like a dumb teenager now?*

*"Well, yeah, but I ain't spending it here," Jack said, giving a judgmental glance around the apartment over Rhys' shoulder. Jack didn't miss the little pout that Rhys tried to hide, gut twisting at just how much that look made his heart pound. How were his emotions spiraling so out of control so quickly?*

*"Rude," Rhys muttered, and Jack just loved the sass in his eye roll, "well I'm not spending it in your office."*

*"Who said anything about my office, dumdummy? We're going back to my place, so get your shoes on and let's get a move on. Grab an extra set of clothes while you're at it, cupcake." Jack couldn't resist smacking Rhys' ass when he bent over to put his shoes on, making the cybernetic man yelp and nearly fall over. Jack grinned back at the glare Rhys threw over his shoulder before he disappeared into the apartment, presumably to get clothes for the next day.*

*Jack was quiet for the most part on their walk to his penthouse. If he was going to have to do some serious talking later he needed to save the energy now. So he settled for listening to Rhys tell him about his day, and Jack definitely took some pride when Rhys mentioned that Vasquez was still avoiding him like the plague.*

*If Jack said he wasn't completely enraptured by Rhys' reaction to his penthouse then he would be a liar. He forgot Rhys had never really been to his apartment except for when Jack had carried him there while he was in a drug-induced coma. He had to admit, his place was pretty freakin' badass, he was the one who'd designed it, after all. There was a very modern theme to the place, all the furniture sleek and simple in that way that screamed expensive. It was surprisingly tasteful for Jack, not gaudy like one would expect.*

*Rhys was wide-eyed as he looked around, occasionally running his fingertips over items in passing. The apartment was spotless, thanks to the cleaning bots Jack installed himself. He led Rhys into the living room where the younger man sat down on the large, sectional black couch. He picked up one of the yellow throw pillows with an offended frown, giving Jack a look that said, 'really?' Jack only winked and took Rhys' overnight bag from him so he could bring it to the bedroom.*

*"Do you seriously have a giant portrait of yourself in your own house?!" Rhys shouted through the penthouse, and when Jack returned to the living room he was pointing at said portrait. Rhys was right, it was giant, practically floor-to-ceiling, with Jack's very handsome, grinning profile in the center. It was done in a pop-art style and Jack thought it was very tasteful, thank you very much.*

*"Whoa, whoa, whoa, which one of us has posters of me all over their bedroom? Pretty sure that's you, baby cakes. Not that I can blame you, I'm pretty frickin' handsome." Jack caught the throw pillow Rhys threw at him and sat down next to him on the couch, kicking his feet up onto the glass coffee table. "I know, I know, you're absolutely amazed by my incredible sense of style. I bet you're thinking, 'wow, just when I thought Handsome Jack couldn't get any more perfect.'"*

*Rhys gave an over-exaggerated eye roll and leaned into Jack's side when he draped his arm over the back of the couch. "I'll admit, I'm pleasantly surprised. I thought your apartment would be more..." Jack narrowed his eyes, silently warning Rhys to choose his next words wisely, "extravagant would be the nice way to put it."*

*Rhys shuffled around so he was sitting on the couch with one leg folded under him and the other hanging over the edge of the couch, facing Jack. He turned his head to look out of the massive window at the back wall of the room. It stretched from one end of the wall to the other, overlooking a stunning view of Elpis' scarred surface and the never-ending expanse of stars beyond. The view was similar to the one in Jack's office, only this window was one solid piece and about five feet wide instead of floor-to-ceiling.*

*Jack got lost in the purple reflection of Elpis in Rhys' mismatched eyes, much preferring this view then any he could get out of a window. He reached his free hand out to place on Rhys' knee, gently stroking with his thumb rhythmically. Jack was starting to get worried again for his own selfish reasons. He knew Rhys was going to want to start talking soon, but he was enjoying this moment of peace between them. He knew very well that this could be the last moment they shared like this, depending on how their conversation went. He'd never admit just how badly he didn't want this to be the end, but Jack was no fool, he was aware of just how much damage he could do with words alone, whether he meant to or not.*

*When Rhys turned to face him again Jack leaned forward to capture him in a kiss, stabilizing himself with the hand on Rhys' knee. He savored every second of it like it was the last kiss they'd ever share, really trying to memorize every curve of his lips, how soft they were compared to his own, the way*

*Rhys tilted his head just slightly so they slotted together perfectly. Rhys leaned into him and Jack used the hand that was at the back of the couch to cup the back of his neck, the one at his knee moving to the small of his back so he could pull him against him bodily.*

*The sounds Rhys made were Jack's favorite, like music to his ears. The little contented hum the younger man let out had Jack keening and his head swimming. Maybe, if he was lucky, he could keep Rhys distracted like this, keep his mind off of the more pressing matters they'd come there to discuss. The hands at Jack's chest were calming in a way the CEO didn't think he'd ever have the privilege to feel from another person. It got him thinking irrational thoughts about love and 'the one.'*

*Rhys was the one to pull away with a swipe of his tongue, but Jack was chasing after him anxiously. It didn't stop Jack when Rhys turned his head away to avoid another kiss, instead planting them at his cheek, his jaw, down the long, milky expanse of his neck; really just anywhere he could reach.*

*"Jack...", Rhys whispered in his ear. Jack couldn't suppress the shiver that licked up his spine from those soft lips tickling the shell of his ear and the warm breath ghosting over his skin.*

*Jack let out a rumbling hum but didn't stop his prodding kisses, a wet tongue joining the onslaught. He could feel the goosebumps prickling Rhys' skin beneath his lips and the soft panting in his ear was sending hot waves of arousal through him. He was so close to avoiding the conversation looming over his head, he just needed a little more...*

*"Jack, come on," Rhys' tone was a little firmer now, the hands at his chest starting to push gently. Jack didn't let up his hold on the pretty little thing in his arms, the hand at Rhys' neck tangling into soft, auburn hair.*

*"Don't tell me you don't like it, baby," Jack purred in his ear, all seductive and promising. He wasn't being fair, he knew that, but Jack never claimed to be a good person.*

*"I'm serious, we really need to...", Rhys trailed off when Jack started sucking a mark just below his ear, and Jack considered it a victory when that lithe body arched into him. He was right there, Rhys was losing his resolve, he could tell.*

*"Mm, I know what you need, Rhysie." Jack bit the hickey he'd just left and he could only describe what Rhys did in his arms as a shudder. There was a moment where Jack thought he'd won, but then Rhys was pushing firm enough at his chest to dislodge the older man some.*

*"I really don't think you do." Any sultry undertones were gone from Rhys' voice, all hard resolve now. That had Jack pulling away enough to lock eyes with him. Jack's heart sank at what he saw, realizing he'd officially lost the battle, and the war was not far behind.*

*This was a fear Jack was not prepared for.*

## Chapter End Notes

Jack listens more than you think he does, Rhys!!!

# Chapter 16

## Chapter Summary

Jack and Rhys have their talk, even though it's more shouting than talking...

## Chapter Notes

Thank you guys so much for all your amazing comments!! I really appreciate all of them, it means so much to me and I look forward to reading them every chapter!! You guys are the best!!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Rhysie... I don’t know if this is such a good idea...,” Jack had never sounded so unsure about something in his entire life. He hated how weak he sounded, so defenseless against the hard look he was being given. Jack didn’t do well with vulnerability, and right now he was pretty sure he’d never felt so vulnerable.

Rhys had moved far enough away now that Jack couldn’t hold him, hands in his lap. The only place they were touching was where their knees gently brushed between them. It left Jack feeling cold and empty, like there was a wall between them. He was starting to wonder if talking was what he was fearing the most right now or if it was facing his mistakes that scared him more. Both sounded pretty awful.

“We have to talk about... This,” Rhys gestured between them. It didn’t go unnoticed by Jack the way his hand was trembling, nor did the way he grasped his own hand to try and hide it. “We have to talk about...,” Rhys’ eyes dropped in time with the sink of Jack’s stomach. The poor kid couldn’t even say it out loud, just how badly had he fucked with his head? Jack didn’t want to know.

“I’m not exactly very good at talking, pumpkin.” Jack tried to cup Rhys’ cheek, but the younger man turned away from the gesture. Jack could feel his uneasy sorrow twisting into something more malicious. *This*, he decided, was what he feared most. The blind rage. He could feel it creeping up on him, shrouding his emotions like a smog.

“If you can’t handle *talking*, there’s no way this is going to work. Jack, what you did... It was fucked up. Really, really fucked up—,”

“You think I don’t know that?” Jack cut him off, hands clenching into tight fists. He could feel every rational thought slipping away, chest tightening with rage. How was he losing it so *fast*?

“Did I say that you didn’t?” Rhys snapped defensively. “You’re not *stupid*. Fucked in the head, sure, but you’re definitely not stupid. I know you can comprehend that what you did was wrong.” Rhys took a deep breath but Jack didn’t give him the time to regain his composure.

“Right, I’m fucked in the head, the guy who saved your *freakin’* life. More than once, might I add. Please, continue to tell me how awful I am.” Jack was so *angry*, at himself, at Rhys, at the people

who had tried to hurt him. It was all so misdirected but he couldn't stop. He didn't *want* to say these things, but some fucked up coping mechanism was shoving the words through his mouth like Play-Doh through a cheese grater.

"Can you just listen for one second instead of getting defensive? I'm trying to— to tell you how I feel, I'm not trying to shove it in your face." Rhys took a moment to purse his lips while Jack tried to ignore the moisture at the corners of Rhys' eyes.

"Look, I get that we weren't... *Together* or anything, not really, so I don't exactly have a right to be upset. But it still hurt, and it hurt *more* because I think that was your intention..." Rhys jerked his head up when Jack stood abruptly, arms out at his sides.

"You're *right*, cupcake. I was trying to hurt you, is that what you wanna hear?" Jack felt his stomach lurch at the way Rhys shrunk back at the statement. He couldn't stop. "I wanted to make you hate me *so much* that you'd never want to see my fucking face again," Jack pointed a finger to his own chest, leaning into Rhys' space. "You know *why*? Because I actually liked having you around. I was fucking *addicted* to you and I *hated* it." Jack had leaned right into Rhys' face at that point, his words nothing but seething poison pouring from his mouth.

For a moment, Rhys looked like he was about to cry, but then his expression turned sharp with anger. The younger man stood also, forcing Jack to move out of his space. "Really, that's how you felt? I was just a thorn in the side of the great king of Helios?" Jack flinched back when Rhys jabbed him in the chest with a metal finger, the fire in those blue and brown eyes making the hairs on the back of his neck stand on end.

"I don't fucking *buy* it."

Jack smacked the hand away and grabbed the front of Rhys' shirt, yanking him forward so they were close enough that their noses almost touched. He didn't say anything, not yet, just glowered at the younger man with as much fury and malevolence as he could. He wasn't sure what he was trying to do, maybe scare him, get him to cower and run away like everyone else did. But Rhys stood his ground, gripping Jack's wrist with his cybernetic hand and returning the glare.

With a grunt, Jack shoved Rhys away from him, not hard enough to hurt him, just enough to get a point across. He'd been trying to keep Rhys away for his own sake, because what was happening between them now was bound to happen again if Jack was in the picture. Rhys had no idea what he thought he wanted to get involved in, didn't know the extent of the train wreck that was Jack's life.

"I don't know what you want from me," Jack said finally, "I already freakin' apologized! Is that not good enough for you?!" He was shouting now, all control lost. He let out a feral sound as he punched a potted plant from one of the end tables, sending it flying across the room before it shattered on the ground. Dirt exploded everywhere, shards of ceramic scattering.

"Do you have any idea what it took for me to apologize? News flash, kitten! Handsome Jack doesn't say sorry. But I did, for *you*, and this is what I get?!"

"Why are you putting words in my mouth?!" Rhys screamed, chasing after Jack as he stomped into the kitchen. They stood on either side of the large marble island in the center, Jack gripping the edge of the counter so tight that his knuckles were white, muscle and veins bulging from his forearms.

"*All* I wanted was to make sure that it didn't happen again, you fucking idiot! You think I didn't appreciate your apology? You think I didn't realize just how important it was that you'd do that for me? Well, you're wrong! I know that's probably hard for you to swallow, god *knows* you're not used to being wrong. But guess what, you couldn't be any more fucking wrong than you are right



now. Let that soak in, jackass.

You know what I want from you? I want you to tell me you won't do it again. I want you to tell me that what you did was a *mistake* and that it'll *never* happen again. And then I want to believe you. I want to believe you and have you press me up against a wall like in all those stupid chick flicks Vaughn makes me watch and I want you to kiss me like you fucking *mean it*. I already accepted your goddamn apology, fuck, I forgave you before you even apologized! Maybe that makes me an idiot, I don't know. But what I do know is that I want this, whatever this is, to be real. Did I spell it out enough for you?!"

Rhys was panting once he was finished with his rant, but the only reason Jack knew that was because he could hear it. He couldn't look at Rhys, not after all of that. He kept his eyes focused on the black marble in front of him, jaw clenched tight as he tried to find some semblance of sanity in his mind. The anger was subsiding just barely, clearing his thoughts just enough to comprehend Rhys' words. He could feel the younger man's eyes boring into him, scrutinizing him like a caged animal.

"Can you at least *look* at me?" When Rhys spoke his voice was softer now, teetering on trembling. Jack could see Rhys reaching across the counter for him, hands palm-up.

Jack looked there first, studying every detail he could see. The lines in his flesh hand versus the metal plates of the robotic one; the soft expanse of skin contrasting against the cold, hard aluminum. It was an older model, Jack could tell that much. He decided he'd have to get him a new one, something sleek and seamless.

Without even realizing it, Jack was finally relenting his grip on the counter to bring his hands to Rhys' outstretched ones. It was like being doused in a bucket of water, the way the calm hit him so suddenly before dripping down his whole body, soaking him through. He was starting to see a pattern here, Rhys and calm associated together. Jack felt grounded just from a simple touch, like they were communicating without words.

Rhys was watching him expectantly when Jack finally met his gaze, brows furrowed together with nerves or confusion, Jack couldn't tell. He wanted nothing more than to smooth that look away, bring rest to all of Rhys' fears. Again, Jack wondered if this was what love felt like, passionate emotions of all nature and the swelling need to ease away all of the bad ones.

"It won't happen again," Jack said so quietly he wasn't even sure it was more than just a thought. The only thing that gave it away was how Rhys' face softened, relaxed, and that felt *right*. Jack squeezed Rhys' hands before he let them go, only needing a few long strides to get to him on the other side of the counter.

Rhys was all open arms when Jack collided with him, arms wrapping around each other and lips meeting between them. Jack backed him up against the wall, pinning him there bodily as his hands slipped under his shirt to trace the tattoos he had memorized by heart. They were just lips and tongues and teeth, devouring each other with gasping breaths and desperate sounds.

"I *promise* I won't do anything like that again," Jack whispered between wet, smiley kisses. Rhys had his hands in Jack's hair, rubbing at his scalp the way he liked, hips arching forward into Jack's. He pressed right back, grinding against Rhys with a breathless groan. They stayed like that for a while, kissing and grinding on each other like horny teenagers. It was everything Jack wanted, because all he wanted was Rhys.

"I'm not calling you my boyfriend," Jack whispered against Rhys' cheek, smirking against the flushed skin. Rhys giggled in such a way that made Jack's chest blossom with warmth, filling him up

until he felt like he was floating.

“That doesn’t meant I can’t call you *mine*,” Rhys murmured, and Jack was pretty sure that was just a test so he let it slide.

Jack gave a grunt in response, which seemed good enough for Rhys if the huge grin on his face was anything to go by. He tried leaning in again but was surprised to find Rhys’ hands holding him back. Jack cocked a brow but his questions were answered quickly as Rhys pushed the jacket from his shoulders and tossed it over the back of one of the high chairs lined up at the island. Jack let Rhys work, watching him with a heated gaze as he worked open each clasp to his vest, then the buttons to his shirt underneath. He pushed those off together, letting them fall to the floor.

A soft hand slipped under Jack’s last layer and the CEO craned his neck so he could kiss at Rhys’ shoulder where it had been exposed from the stretched out collar of his shirt sliding too far to one side. Jack rolled his hips into the cybernetic hand that was working open his belt with precision, and Rhys was kind enough to give a firm upward stroke with the palm of his hand where Jack’s cock was straining against his jeans. Jack sucked in a breath and bit down on the ball of Rhys’ shoulder, his cock twitching at the high-pitched sound Rhys let out.

“I’m gonna fuck you right up against this wall,” Jack rasped in his ear, moaning when Rhys finally got his pants open enough to slip his hand inside and cup him through his underwear. Rhys squeezed him and grinned at the way Jack’s hips bucked forward. “Just like those chick flicks, hmm?”

Rhys nodded and kissed the clasp on the right side of Jack’s face, nosing along the seam of his mask. The gesture had Jack’s heart thundering in his chest, the idea of taking the mask off coming and going in the blink of an eye. He pulled at Rhys’ sweatpants before he could get too sentimental, groaning loudly as he was met with Rhys’ hard cock pressed snug up against very, very pink underwear. Jack had no idea why, but that *really* did it for him.

Jack let Rhys kick the sweatpants away before he crowded him, strong hands each grabbing perfect handfuls of twinkie ass (Jack had found that term on the ECHOnet and decided that other than Rhys being so frickin’ tall, the word described him perfectly). He gave a firm squeeze to the cheeks before bringing his hands up under Rhys’ shirt so he could pull it over his head and discard it carelessly.

The sight before him was deserving of awards. Rhys was so damn *pretty*, long legs, soft in all the right places, perky nipples pink against pale skin. Jack needed to remember to take pictures of him like this sometime, or maybe a video. A possessive wave of emotion flooded Jack’s dangerously, remembering that there were other men, *strangers* out there with pictures of *his* pretty boy. He’d have to find someone to take care of that.

They started kissing again, hot and heavy while Rhys shuffled Jack’s pants and underwear down his hips just enough to pull his cock free. Jack moaned and pressed harder into the kiss when Rhys started stroking his cock. Jack pressed his thumb into the damp spot on Rhys’ underwear in retaliation, eliciting a whine from the smaller man, the spot growing wetter from the touch.

“Turn around,” Jack murmured against Rhys’ lips, and the cybernetic man complied, arching his hips so he could grind his ass against Jack’s crotch. With a firm grip at Rhys’ hips Jack ground his cock against that perky ass, growling at the way Rhys crooned for more. He gave a few appreciative paws to the cheeks before he pulled Rhys’ underwear down and pulled them apart, slotting his cock between the soft globes.

It was a little dry but Jack still gave a few thrusts anyway, the friction wonderful on his throbbing cock. He was quick to wet his fingers with his tongue, surprised to find Rhys looser than normal when he pressed a finger in. Jack plastered himself along Rhys’ back and the younger man moaned

at the intrusion, rocking back on it.

“*Baby*,” Jack murmured in a sing-song voice, “did you play with yourself today?” Rhys shuddered beneath him at the question, and even though he wasn’t facing him Jack could tell he was blushing by the red tips of his ears.

“Mhmm,” came Rhys’ coy response. Jack chuckled and pressed a second finger in with ease, making Rhys gasp and press closer to him.

“Did you think about me?” This was, one hundred percent, an ego stroke for Jack. He *knew* Rhys thought about him, the kid was thinking about him while he masturbated before he even met Jack. He wanted to hear him say it anyway.

“Y— *ahh!*” Rhys cried out as Jack curled his fingers into his sweet spot and grabbed his cock at the same time. “Y-Yes, *yeah*, always you,” Rhys whispered, his knees trembling with the effort to hold himself up through all the pleasure.

Jack’s solution was to crowd him closer to the wall, supporting as much of his weight as the angle would allow. Rhys’ face was pressed up against the wall now, head turned to the side so his cheek was flat against the cool surface. Jack took that as an opportunity to kiss at his face, nipping at the corner of his lips every so often.

“What’d ya think about?” Jack was grinning when he asked, and he relished in the deep flush on Rhys’ cheeks and the way he closed his eyes in embarrassment. Jack started scissoring his fingers as he worked up a rhythm on Rhys’ cock, the younger man trying to press forward and back at the same time to get more sensation.

“Riding...,” Rhys mumbled breathlessly, “thought about r-riding you.” Jack groaned in his ear and rewarded him with stroke to his prostate, making him cry out again.

“Mmm... Did you ride one of your toys? Pretend it was me?” Rhys nodded frantically and Jack pressed in a third finger and squeezed the head of his cock. The lithe body beneath him arched, Rhys’ mouth falling open on a silent moan.

“Not as good,” Rhys whispered and opened his eyes so he could glance at Jack, rocking his hips back and forth, “not as good as you, Jack.”

Well, fuck. Jack was pretty sure he’d never been so hard in his life, precum dripping from the head and streaking on Rhys’ ass from having the younger man rock against him. “You’re so *frickin’* hot, baby,” Jack growled, giving a few more thrusts of his fingers and strokes of his hand before he was pulling away. The whine of protest from Rhys sent a hot wave of arousal straight to his cock. He felt like if he didn’t fuck Rhys right at that very instant he was going to lose his damn mind.

Jack quickly pulled the rest of his clothes off and spun Rhys back around so the dazed boy was facing him. Effortlessly, Jack hoisted Rhys up by the legs and the younger man easily complied, wrapping his legs around Jack’s hips. Rhys was pinned to the wall, the older man holding him up by a firm grip on his ass. With his cybernetic arm around Jack’s shoulders Rhys licked a few stripes along the palm of his flesh hand before he reached between them to stroke Jack’s cock.

“*Shit*,” the older man cursed, bucking up into the warm, wet heat of Rhys’ fist. He repeated the action a few times, making sure Jack was slick enough so he could lift Rhys up a little higher against the wall to line himself up. Jack let his head fall onto Rhys’ shoulder and let gravity do the work, that tight heat slowly sliding down his cock.

Rhys tipped his head back with a soft '*thunk*' against the wall, moaning at the feeling of being so full. Jack absolutely loved every sound Rhys made, each one spurring the man on. "That feel good?" Jack whispered just as Rhys became fully seated on his cock. Rhys whimpered and tightened his hold around Jack's shoulders, experimentally grinding his hips down. Both men made a pleased sound and ground against each other again.

It took a little shuffling around but eventually Jack got his forearms hooked under Rhys' thighs and started rocking into him, using his arms to push Rhys up and then let him slide back down to meet his upward thrusts. Jack's muscles were tense from the exertion but he didn't care, not now at least. He'd definitely be sore in the morning but that was for another time. Right now, all he could think about was Rhys and the sounds he was making with his lips pressed right up against Jack's ear.

"*Just like that...*," Rhys whispered, and Jack had to bite down on his collarbone so he didn't shout with pleasure. It was a slow pace, steady and even, just like Rhys' moans. Each drag of his cock had Jack panting, especially when the head would catch on the rim before plunging back in. Rhys seemed to like that, too, judging by the way his thighs flexed and he let out a sound not too different from a squeal each time.

Jack widened his stance for more leverage and started fucking into him faster, their bodies starting to slide against one another with sweat. With one, hard, angled thrust Jack rammed right into Rhys' prostate, the CEO's name erupting from his lips like Jack had ripped it right from his lungs. Each thrust after that was a chant of Jack's name, and Jack could feel Rhys' heels digging into his lower back for *more*.

At this angle, Jack couldn't get much more power behind his thrusts, and honestly, he was getting tired. Believe it or not, it wasn't easy fucking someone while supporting their entire weight, even if Rhys' skinny ass didn't weigh much. Jack pulled Rhys away from the wall and sank to his knees, hissing at the bite of the hard floor on his joints. Rhys grabbed at him like he was afraid he was going to leave, so Jack smiled and kissed him to calm his nerves.

A couple more seconds of shuffling around and Jack was pounding into Rhys again, and if the fingernails in his shoulders were any indication then this position was even better for the man beneath him. Jack braced one hand against the wall beside Rhys' head while the other reached between them to grab the pretty, leaking cock there.

"*Jack*," it was a low, sultry moan that had Jack leaning forward and driving into Rhys harder, testing just how flexible the cybernetic man was. Surprisingly, he was very flexible, his body bending and curling however Jack maneuvered him.

They were both trying to sneak kisses as they rocked, but they were both too out of breath to make them last long. Each press was mostly just a quick swipe of tongue followed by panting breaths that mingled between them. Jack couldn't stop staring into Rhys' eyes, all clouded over with lust and something else that Jack couldn't quite describe. Whatever it was, he liked it, craved more of it, and tried to convey back to Rhys.

"*Fuck* yeah, baby, that ass is *amazing*," Jack groaned out, losing some rhythm to his thrusts. Rhys' nails raked down his arms hard enough that Jack was pretty sure he drew blood (at least with his cybernetics), mouth hanging open on a silent scream as he came between them. Jack fought to keep his eyes open so he could watch Rhys come undone, back arched and head tipped back like some ethereal fantasy.

"*Shit, shit, shit*," Jack grunted in quick succession, eyes finally squeezing shut as the sting of Rhys' scratch marks mingled with the pleasure in such a way that had his hips snapping forward feverishly. Rhys' fucked-out voice was whispering encouragements in his ear and his hands were gently toying

at his hair.

“I’m gonna come— Rhys, *Rhys, fuck!*” Jack snapped his hips forward as hard as he could one last time, pressing in as deep as he possibly could while he filled Rhys with his cum. He let out a long, guttural moan as his orgasm crashed through him, and he swore just the sound of Rhys’ voice in his ear made it last twice as long. Jack let his head loll forward onto Rhys’ shoulder, the younger man still petting at him affectionally and kissing at his jaw.

Now, the pain in his knees was enough to worry about. It was shooting up his legs and into his hips, the muscles in his arms and back starting to ache, too. He murmured to Rhys that he was going to pull out and they shared a kiss before Jack did just that, standing slowly as joints protested like rusty hinges.

“Fuuuuck,” Jack complained, hoping Rhys didn’t notice the way his thighs trembled as he stood. Rhys just giggled from where he was on the floor, an unspoken ‘old’ joke floating around somewhere. Jack grabbed some paper towels and crouched down to clean Rhys up, shivering when the younger man traced over the scratches on his arms. They stung to the touch, but in a good way.

“Kitten’s got claws,” Jack murmured with a grin, accepting the kiss Rhys leaned toward him for. The last time Rhys had left scratches on him they only took a day or two to heal, but these ones were *much* deeper. Jack planned on wearing them as a badge of honor.

“Sorry,” Rhys sounded sleepy, and he looked it, too. He chuckled and placed a kiss on Rhys’ cheek, helping the younger man to his feet before he stumbled over to the garbage can to throw out the soiled paper towel.

They each got a glass of water and kissed lazily in the doorway, gently touching each other in random places. Eventually, they made it to Jack’s room and cuddled up under the silk sheets that Rhys reminded Jack he *loved*. They put on a sitcom to fall asleep to, although it wasn’t long before Rhys was complaining that the massive TV was too bright. Jack shut it off and settled for spooning while Rhys pushed his pillow off the bed so they could share.

“You’re my *boyfriend*,” Rhys murmured into the darkness, and Jack could hear the teasing grin on his lips. He let that one slide, too.

## Chapter End Notes

I couldn't have them mad at each other for too long so obviously they had to have more make up sex, this was way more fucking than arguing lol. Sorry if anyone is kind of out of character?? I was feeling a little self conscious about this chapter when I skimmed back over it... But I hope you enjoyed :)

# Chapter 17

## Chapter Summary

Jack gets Rhys a shiny new present.

## Chapter Notes

Thank you guys for your continued support! This has been so much fun writing for all of you, I'm so happy I was able to give so many people something to enjoy!! Unfortunately, this story will be coming to a close soon, mostly likely at chapter 19 or 20. But have no fear! I definitely plan on writing more Rhack in the very near future and already have lots of ideas cooking!!

If you haven't seen it already I did write a one-shot based off of an amazing idea by @cannibalspaghet (twitter) called Leg Day. Please check it out if you're interested!!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“What do you *mean* it’s not finished?” Jack snarled as he steeped his hands and rested his forehead against them. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath to try and control himself. He at least needed to get an answer out of this woman before he strangled her.

“We’ve— um— we’ve run into some complications, s-sir,” the woman on the other side of Jack’s desk stammered as she looked back down at her clipboard. After she cleared her throat she placed the clipboard down on the desk and hesitantly slid it over to Jack. The poor thing practically jumped out of her skin when Jack slammed his fist down onto the clipboard so she couldn’t push it any closer.

“I don’t have time for complications, mmkay sweetheart?” Jack picked the clipboard up and whisked it across the room like a frisbee. The woman, and subsequently the head of robotics, opened her mouth to speak, although Jack didn’t give her the opportunity. “A-tut-tut,” Jack scolded, eyes dark, “let me stop you right there. I gave you a job to do, and I expect you to *frickin’* do it, ya got that? So either you work yourself to death to get this thing fixed, oh, and I mean work yourself *to death*, or I shoot your department so far into space they might see you on Aquator. Am I making myself clear?”

The woman nodded and took a half-step away from Jack’s desk. He stood from his chair then, freezing her in place. What, did she think she could run? Jack had eyes and ears *everywhere*, he practically *was* Helios. There wasn’t a damn place on his space station she could hide.

“I’m gonna be keeping my eye on you, cupcake,” Jack said as he shook a finger at her, voice taking on that dangerously sweet lilt, “if I so much as catch wind that you’ve taken so much as a fifteen minute break before this is resolved, well, let’s just say I’ll be finding a new head of robotics.” The CEO grinned like a wolf, all teeth and intimidation. Her eyes looked like they were going to bulge right from her skull and *damn*, he was really getting off on this. He loved a good power trip.

“Ta-ta,” he murmured with a flirty wave of his hand and watched the woman practically run out of

his office. Once she was gone he let out a heavy sigh and sunk back into his chair, kicking his legs up onto his desk. He'd have to call Rhys in for a quickie after that.

Speaking of Rhys, he was the whole reason Jack was so bent out of shape. He'd spent a few nights while Rhys was sleeping looking over his cybernetic arm, inspecting every last detail of it. He'd figured out that the model was a few years old, about six or seven, even though it was evident it only had the wear-and-tear of about three. Rhys must have chosen that model because it was cheaper, and even though it served its purpose it wasn't anywhere close to top of the line. That just wouldn't do.

So, Jack had contacted his best robotics team and set them on the project of building a brand-new, state-of-the-art arm. The design was much more sleek than Rhys' current one with softer edges and smoother joints. Jack had specifically requested it be made out of a titanium alloy so it was lighter but also sturdier. The haptic feedback technology was much more advanced than anything ever created before and would give Rhys realistic sensation close to that of real skin-and-bone. Oh, and it had an automatic warming feature so that it was the same temperature as the rest of Rhys' body, but that was more for Jack (it was quite jarring to feel an icy-cold hand on his back when he was railing into the kid).

What was the occasion? Oh, nothing, he was just nice like that (and maybe it was kind of a 'sorry I fucked up please forgive me' present). He was sure Rhys would be ecstatic and Jack would be lying if he said he wasn't totally excited to see Rhys' face when he gave it to him. The only reason there was such a short deadline on the project was because he was too eager, as soon as he'd come up with the idea he'd wanted to tell Rhys about it just so he could watch his eyes light up with excitement. Even just picturing it now made him smile, there was no doubt in his mind Rhys would react like a kid on Christmas morning. Now his power-boner was just an excitement-boner.

By the time Rhys came up to his office for lunch Jack was ravenous, and not for food. He'd jumped on Rhys so fast he'd dropped the food he'd gotten for them, the contents spilling all over the floor. The younger man tried to protest against Jack's advances so he could clean up but Jack didn't let him, insisting a cleaner bot would take care of it. Jack proceeded to bend him over his desk with a fistful of Rhys' hair in his grasp and fucked him so hard he was pretty sure there'd be bruises on his hips. Jack had relished in the way Rhys' thighs trembled when he tried to stand up straight afterwards.

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It had been another three whole days before the arm was ready, which was not up to Jack's standards. He'd called down to the robotics department every day for updates, each time shouting more and more. But now, he finally had the prosthetic laid out on his desk and *man* was it pretty. It was a shiny platinum color that was sure to turn heads and Jack was pleased to see it looked just as expensive as it was. He'd spared no expense on it, and he'd made sure that the blueprints were locked away somewhere only he could access so it was a true one of a kind. He ran his fingertips down the length of the arm, flicking at the digits and pressing his fingers against the pads. It was kind of a little weird to think this was pretty much Rhys' severed arm now, just laying on his desk casually.

Jack sent out a quick text to Rhys telling him to come up to his office right away, and he made sure to clarify that he had a *good* surprise waiting for him (he didn't need Rhys getting anxiety that there'd be a repeat with Nisha). He draped the fancy silk Hyperion cloth back over the arm to conceal it and sat down in his chair while he waited (im)patiently for Rhys to arrive. When Rhys finally showed up what felt like ages (but could have only been minutes) later Jack stood from his desk theatrically and opened his arms wide.

“Rhysie!” Jack exclaimed as Rhys approached his desk looking a little wary. “What’s that look for? Daddy got you a present!” Jack grinned with a hungry glint in his eye at the way Rhys blushed.

“A present? What for?” Rhys asked, gazing down at the object on the desk speculatively.

“Just ‘cause I like you, how’s that for ‘what for’?” Jack grabbed Rhys by the tie so he could pull him over the desk to kiss him. Rhys let out a surprised noise as their lips collided and grabbed onto Jack’s bicep for some stability. The kiss they shared was heated, all tongues and teeth. When they parted Rhys’ lips were all ready pink and swollen and it was really taking all that Jack had not to just shove that mouth down right on his cock.

Jack let go of Rhys’ tie and the slighter man pulled back, looking down at the gift again. Jack could see the excitement in his eyes as he reached for the silk cloth. This was it, the moment Jack had been waiting for. He could see it now, Rhys jumping for joy, maybe even crying, *definitely* sinking to his knees for a ‘thank you’ blowjob. Oh yeah, this was going to be *good*.

Rhys’ hand hesitated just before he was about to grab the cloth, his eyes flicking up to Jack suspiciously. “It isn’t, like, a giant dildo or anything, is it?”

Jack burst into laughter, because how could you not at a question like that? “Oh, oh *man* that’s good,” Jack cackled, smacking his hand down onto his desk a few times. “Is that what you want, Rhysie? Because I can *definitely* make that happen. *Hooo*, you’re a dirty little thing, kitten.”

Rhys glared even though the blush on his face made him look significantly less menacing. “You’re the one who would— whatever, just shut up.” Rhys yanked the decorative cloth off of the desk and Jack quickly stifled his laughter, all of his attention on Rhys’ face.

Rhys’ eyes went wide and his jaw went slack and, oh yeah, Jack caught that surprised little gasp. *This* was what he’d been waiting for. That surprised look was everything right now, had Jack grinning from ear to ear. Honestly, Jack didn’t think he’d be the one feeling like a kid on Christmas, but his heart was beating so fast he almost couldn’t contain himself.

“*Well?* Whaddya think?” Jack cooed almost smugly, but there was a tone to his voice that suggested otherwise.

When Rhys’ gaze fell on him the boy was grinning, and Jack was *really* glad his mask was covering the blush on his cheeks. When was the last time someone made him do *that*? Rhys just looked so damn happy and it filled Jack with such a warmth knowing he was the one who put that smile on his face. He was pretty sure he’d never made another human being happy in his entire life until now, he never expected it to feel so great.

“Did you really... Get this for *me*?” Rhys asked, looking back down at the arm so he could run his fingertips over it the same way Jack had when it’d been dropped off.

“Who else would I get it for, pumpkin?” Jack’s voice was soft, gentle. “I did a little more than just *get* it, though. This right here? Special made, just for you. One of a kind, nothin’ like it out there. Pretty frickin’ cool, eh? Designed it myself.”

Rhys was rounding the desk before Jack knew it, pressing into the larger man’s chest as he pulled him into a kiss. Jack hummed as he felt Rhys’ flesh hand tangle in his hair, the other cupping the nape of his neck. Jack brought his own hands to cup Rhys’ ass, holding the smaller man against him tight. The whimper he received when he started kneading at Rhys’ ass was reward enough.

Their kiss was passionate like the one shared before, just this time with more grinding. Rhys was



gently tugging at Jack's hair, his grip tightening every time the older man bit or sucked at his lips. When they parted both men were panting, Rhys' lips tracing kisses up Jack's jaw. Jack nipped at the tattoo on Rhys' neck for good measure before pulling away, taking Rhys' chin in his hand so he could peck one last kiss to his lips.

"You hate it, don't you?" Jack teased with a big grin, earning himself an eye roll.

"You're the *worst*," Rhys teased right back, turning to look down at his shiny new arm again. Jack placed a hand on the small of his back and kissed the shell of his ear, pressing himself right up against Rhys' side.

"Let's install this bitch, baby."

Jack sat Rhys down in his chair so the younger man didn't fall over when his ECHOeye rebooted and updated to the arm's software. Naturally, Jack made some suggestive comments as Rhys stripped the top half of his body so he could take his old arm off. Jack wasn't very helpful in that process, more concerned with playing with Rhys' nipples and tracing his tattoos. Not that Rhys was complaining, shuddering under each touch, fingers fumbling with the cybernetics he could usually remove with his eyes closed.

Once the old arm was off, Jack placed it on his desk and picked up the new one. He shuffled his way between Rhys' parted legs and brought the shoulder joint up to the socket in Rhys' torso, slotting it into place. Rhys fastened some things into place while Jack held the arm still, and once the last connector settled a firm 'click' a whirring sound started to echo through the office.

Rhys' ECHOeye went dead as it rebooted, his head thunking back against the chair. Jack crouched down in front of him and gently held the wrist of his new arm in his hand, the appendage still dead weight at the moment. Jack started to get a little nervous at how long it was taking, but eventually the ECHOeye flickered back to life. Three blue dots swirled in a circle around the iris as the software started updating.

"You all right there, Rhysie?" Jack asked, only receiving a mute nod in response. Well, at least he could hear him.

Another few moments ticked by and then Jack started to feel the metal warming against his fingertips, and not from the heat of his own skin. He ran his hand up the arm all the way to Rhys' shoulder and then back down, curling his fingers around cybernetic ones. Suddenly, the arm jerked to life, and Jack almost fell back on his ass when he had to flinch away so he didn't get slapped in the face.

"Whoa! Holy shit, I *felt* that!" Rhys exclaimed, flexing his fingers in front of his face. He turned the hand over a few times, inspecting how fluid the motion was.

"It's called haptic feedback, pumpkin. It's only at about eighty-seven percent of a normal arm, but I've got people working on boosting that up." Jack's eyes fluttered when Rhys gently touched his face with the cybernetic hand, smiling up at him softly where he was still crouched in front of him.

Rhys leaned forward as he moved his hand into Jack's hair, feeling the sensation of the strands between his fingers. He looked so amazed, eyes wide and curious. Jack let him touch where he wanted, feeling the collar of his shirt, the clasps of his mask. He wondered how it must have felt, gaining sensation back to a part of his body that felt nothing for years. It must have felt nice, judging by how much he was running his hands all over Jack.

Jack purred as Rhys dipped his hand into the front of his many layers, combing his fingers through

the light dusting of chest hair. When Rhys pulled his hand from his shirt his fingers lingered around Jack's neck, making the older man a little wary. He knew Rhys wasn't going to choke him, trusted him even, but after having so many people try to kill you it was a little unnerving to have fingers around your neck. He relaxed when the metal continued along, thumb brushing over his Adam's apple before delving back into his hair.

"This is amazing..." Rhys whispered, pulling Jack up by his hair so he was bent over him. Jack braced himself with a hand on each arm rest and accepted the kiss he was pulled into. Rhys' hand continued to wander, brushing down the front of his clothes, pulling his sweater from where it was tucked into his jeans so he could feel the firm abs underneath. Jack groaned into the kiss when Rhys' hand dipped into his pants, tugging at the tuft of hair before his fingers bumped the top of Jack's dick.

It didn't feel *great*, it was still metal on his cock, but it didn't hurt, either, and at least it was warm. Jack let him feel around, thankful that Rhys was taking extra care to be gentle now. Their lips parted as fingers wrapped around the base of his cock, Rhys' lips latching onto Jack's neck. He could tell Rhys was having a hard time moving his hand around with his pants in the way but that didn't stop him, giving Jack an awkward stroke upwards (or technically downwards with the way he was tucked) that had him sucking in a breath.

Without warning, Jack pulled away from Rhys all together, his cock twitching at the pull of Rhys' teeth on his neck. He worked at getting his pants open swiftly and pulled his cock free, gripping it with one hand while the other hooked a thumb into his underwear to keep them pulled down. He gave himself a few firm strokes to get himself fully hard, drinking in the way Rhys watched him hungrily.

"Get naked," he commanded, and Rhys complied instantly, standing from the chair so he could remove the rest of his clothes. "Good boy, Rhysie." Jack absolutely loved the way Rhys arched under the praise, pink cock twitching with arousal. Jack pushed him back down in the chair and fisted a hand into his hair, tugging his head back so Rhys had to crane his neck and arch his back to look up at the CEO.

"Let's put that fancy new arm of yours to work, hmm?" Rhys nodded as best he could with the hand still gripping his hair, eyes half-lidded and cheeks flushed. *Fuck*, he was so pretty, so *submissive*. He really hit the *jackpot* here (hah).

Jack let go of Rhys' hair so he could pull open a drawer and grab the bottle of lube they kept there. He tossed it into Rhys' lap with a devilish smirk, and even though those mismatched eyes were all innocent and curious Jack could tell by the heat in his cheeks that he knew what he was supposed to do. Rhys carefully took the bottle into his flesh hand without breaking eye contact, popping the cap open.

"Get yourself nice and ready for me, kitten," Jack crooned, running the back of his fingers over Rhys' cheek affectionately. The cybernetic man arched into the touch, parting his lips slightly when Jack ran his thumb over his bottom lip. Jack took his hand away so he could swipe up some of the lube Rhys squeezed onto his fingers, using it to slick up his cock as he started to stroke himself slowly.

Rhys added more lube to make up for what Jack took, smearing it around the metal fingers before he scooted a little farther down the seat, arching his hips so he could reach his tight entrance. His legs were spread wide, knees hooked over each arm rest so Jack could see everything, and damn was it a sight to see. Jack watched with dark, attentive eyes as Rhys pressed the first finger in, those blue and brown eyes watching where Jack lazily stroked himself. Shivers ran up and down Jack's spine when

Rhys' breath hitched on a little whimper as he pressed the finger in as far as it would go.

Jack didn't know where to look, eyes darting between the smooth glide of Rhys' finger in and out and the lusty expression on his face. He wished he could see it all, afraid he was going to miss out on something. Surely Rhys wouldn't mind if he recorded him sometime, right? After all, Jack had discovered the sexy little thing *specifically* because he'd been recording himself, clearly he had a thing for it. Jack blindly reached for his keyboard and activated the camera on his computer. It wasn't the best angle, Rhys' legs hiding the lower half of his body, but it was a great shot of that pretty face.

Jack was ripped from his thoughts when Rhys let out a high-pitched moan as he pressed a second finger in. Jack swiped his thumb over the bead of precum that leaked out of the head of his cock, hissing at the touch. He sped up the pace of his hand a little, hoping the slick sounds of Rhys' fingers and the hand on his cock were loud enough for the camera to pick up.

Rhys moaned a soft, "*daddy*," and arched off the chair. Jack could tell by the sound of his voice he must have found his prostate, and Jack had to squeeze his cock tight at the heat that pooled in his gut. Rhys' fingers were frantic now, scissoring and twisting as he worked himself open. Jack kept his eyes focused on the stretch, letting out his own groan at how tight Rhys looked. God, he couldn't wait to be balls-deep in that ass.

A litany of moans started to fill Jack's office as Rhys abused his prostate, working himself up on his own fingers. His eyes were closed now, cheeks a dark pink as he worried at his lip until it was swollen. Jack tucked the waistband of his underwear beneath his balls so he could free up his hand, taking a step closer to Rhys so he could rest it on the inside of his thigh. Rhys opened his eyes at that, whimpering when he met Jack's gaze. He pushed those beautiful legs a little farther apart and started stroking up and down a milky thigh.

"Come on, baby, one more finger," Jack encouraged, squeezing the head of his cock as Rhys pressed a third finger inside. Rhys' mouth fell slack-jawed at the stretch and Jack reveled in the way he clenched down around his fingers like it wasn't enough.

Jack grunted and had to stop stroking his cock, too afraid he might come too soon. He wiped the lube off of his hand and onto his jeans, getting his hand dry so he could run his fingers through Rhys' hair. He smoothed some strands from his face before he grabbed onto it again at the crown of his skull. Rhys cried out in pained-pleasure, and that was when Jack couldn't take it anymore.

Jack grabbed Rhys' wrist and pulled his fingers free, making the tattooed man whine in protest. Jack yanked him up with the grip on his wrist, making him fall into Jack's chest. He got him up onto the edge of his desk and situated himself between his legs again and Rhys eagerly wrapped his legs around Jack's waist. While Jack lined his painfully hard cock up with Rhys' stretched hole the younger man worked at getting Jack's vest and shirt open, slipping his hands beneath the yellow Hyperion sweater so he could touch at the warm skin underneath.

Rhys moaned in Jack's ear as he worked the head of his cock in, one hand braced on the desk while the other helped hold Rhys upright, pressed flat against his back. Jack went slow, sliding in few inches before pulling back out, only to press just that much deeper. Rhys' hot breath was ghosting over his ear as he panted, raising goosebumps all along the right side of Jack's body body. Rhys felt amazing, clenched tight around his cock, warm and wet and perfect. Jack felt like he was going to lose his mind from the pleasure, fingernails digging into the surface of his desk.

Once Jack got himself buried to the hilt he held the position, chuckling as Rhys wiggled his hips in desperation. He was making jerky little movements, nails gently clawing at Jack's chest to get him to move, even going so far as to dig his heels into Jack's lower back. Jack felt just as desperate at Rhys, but the soft whimpers and pleas were worth it.

“Tell daddy what you want,” Jack murmured against his neck, grunting when Rhys purposefully clenched around his cock.

“Fuck me, daddy,” Rhys whined, voice high-pitched and wrecked, “please, I want you to fuck me.”

Jack didn’t hesitate, pulling his hips back until just the head of his cock remained before slamming back home hard enough to make his desk screech on the floor. Rhys threw his head back with a scream, arms quickly wrapping around Jack’s chest so he didn’t fall over. Jack could already feel the bite of Rhys’ nails in his back, and he had to say, he really adored this new aggressive side of his lover.

“Yes, daddy, just like that,” Rhys practically begged, and he cried out again when Jack repeated the motion.

Jack started up a rough, fast pace, pounding into Rhys without mercy. Curses and moans escaped both of them, and with every clench of Rhys’ body Jack knew he was striking his sweet spot. Rhys was holding onto him for dear life, clinging like an octopus. He’d snaked his flesh arm up Jack’s back, poking his hand up through his collar so he could hold onto his hair. His cybernetic arm went the opposite way, pushing Jack’s pants and underwear down so they sagged low on his hips. If Jack wasn’t in so much ecstasy he might have shoved Rhys’ hand away, but that wasn’t the case. Instead, Jack picked up the pace faster as Rhys squeezed at one of his cheeks, simultaneously using the point of contact as a means to stabilize himself.

“I’m close, baby,” Jack whispered, skin on fire everywhere Rhys touched. He was mouthing at that long, pale neck, sucking and biting wherever he pleased. He’d never told Rhys but he absolutely loved sending him back to work all marked up and fucked out; he wished he could see everyone’s faces when he walked by their cubicles, wondering who’d left such obscene bruises on him.

“Me too,” Rhys whispered back, tugging at Jack’s hair with a guttural moan as he pounded into his prostate the next few thrusts. Jack would have reached between them to help Rhys over the edge if his hands weren’t critical in keeping them upright, but Rhys wasn’t exactly relinquishing his hold, either.

Jack was thrown over the edge when Rhys came between them untouched, head thrown back on a loud moan of Jack’s name. His hips stilled with his cock deep inside Rhys, his own moan of the other man’s name escaping him as he filled him up with his cum. He was lightheaded, barely keeping them up as his orgasm shot through him like fireworks. He felt like it was never going to stop, Rhys whimpering and clenching around him like a vice. When his orgasm did finally subside it took him a moment to register that Rhys was whispering in his ear, and then another for him to hear what he was saying over the blood rushing in his ears.

“Thanks, Jack,” he’d whispered, sounding all happy and blissful. Jack smiled against one of the several marks blooming to life on Rhys’ neck, kissing it gently.

“Yeah, yeah,” Jack mumbled back breathlessly as he slipped his soft cock free. He stepped back far enough that he could glance down between them and watch his cum drip down Rhys’ thighs and onto his desk, but not far enough that they had to let go of each other. Rhys shivered, from Jack’s gaze or the sensation of cum spilling out of him, Jack didn’t know. Jack let his head fall forward onto Rhys’ shoulder as the younger man played with his hair, removing his hand from where it had been bracing him against the desk so he could wipe up some of his cum on his thumb and press it into Rhys.

Rhys whined, body over-sensitive from being fucked so raw. Jack pressed the pad of his thumb against Rhys’ prostate and hummed as he trembled in his arms. He teased at the bundle of nerves,

lithe body jerking and quivering from too much sensation. An extra bead of cum slipped from the head of Rhys' soft cock and Jack finally stopped when he heard Rhys sob into his hair.

They kissed languidly while Jack cleaned them up with some tissues he had in the same drawer as the lube, and then kissed again once Rhys was dressed and ready to head back to work. Jack hated how reluctant he was to let Rhys go, already missing the lanky little code monkey once he was out the door. Whatever, at least Jack knew he'd be waiting for him back at the penthouse later.

## Chapter End Notes

Sooo I totally wasn't planning on writing smut two chapters in a row but it just kind of happened. Don't worry, it's allllll relevant.

Please keep in mind that once bl3 comes out on Friday I might not be as active for a while, my life is going to be consumed by this frickin' game and I am soooo excited. I promise I will be uploading another chapter tomorrow and most likely one on Friday, too.

# Chapter 18

## Chapter Summary

Jack makes an unexpected discovery.

## Chapter Notes

Wow, chapter 18 already! I'm really proud of this chapter and chapter 19, so I hope you guys enjoy! Again, thank you all for all of your wonderful comments. I'm always so anxious to read them after every chapter!

Jack rolled over in bed, tired and groggy. The first thing he noticed was that Rhys wasn't on his side of the bed, but when he'd blindly reached for him the sheets were still warm. He let out a dramatic huff, disappointed that Rhys wasn't there. He lifted his head and squinted at the little numbers projecting from the nightstand. Through the blurry edges of sleep he could see it was around 3 AM, which meant Rhys was either using the bathroom or getting a glass of water. He let his head fall back onto his pillow and closed his eyes, prepared to fall back asleep.

A cold touch to his arm jerked him awake again, eyes focusing through the darkness to see Rhys leaning over him. His ECHOeye was glowing bright blue like it had been activated, which didn't really make sense but Jack was too tired to really think much about it. He glanced down at the ice-cold hand on his arm, the shiny metallic surface noticeable even in the near pitch black of his room. That would explain the cold, right? Somewhere in the back of his mind that didn't make sense, either, but again, way too tired.

"Hey, babe," Jack mumbled tiredly, voice raspy from lack of use. He moved his arm out of the way so Rhys could climb back into bed, wrapping it around the smaller man as soon as he joined him. "Takin' a piss?" He pulled Rhys close to his chest and nuzzled his face into his hair, his body already feeling heavier and heavier by the second.

"Mmm," Rhys hummed noncommittally, wiggling closer to Jack. Both men fell back asleep with ease and Jack didn't think about Rhys' ECHOeye or the chill of his arm again.

---

"Jack! Where the hell is my hair gel?!" Rhys shouted from the bathroom, digging through drawer after drawer. "I'm gonna be late for work!" He slammed the last drawer he'd opened with a grunt of frustration, glancing at himself in the mirror. He couldn't go to work like this, his hair all soft and floppy and unprofessional. He pushed some loose strands from his face, turning to Jack when he sauntered into the bathroom.

"Calm down, kitten, it's right here," Jack said, still rubbing sleep from his eyes as he opened one of the mirrors to reveal cabinet space that Rhys didn't even know existed. Somehow, every single shelf was filled, even after all the drawers of crap Rhys had just sifted through. Jack pulled the little tub of green gel from the cabinet and placed it on the counter.

“And you moved it *because*?” Rhys grumbled, opening the (very expensive) jar of hair product and scooping some up with his fingers. He turned to the mirror and started smoothing out his hair, grunting as Jack pressed himself up against his back and effectively getting very much in his way.

“I ‘unno,” Jack shrugged as he closed his eyes and rested his head on Rhys’ shoulder. It was extremely difficult fixing his hair with Jack draped over him like a very heavy cape but he managed. Once he finished he quickly rinsed his hands and pried Jack from his back, much to the older man’s disapproval.

“Jack, I have to *go*,” Rhys whined as Jack pulled him to his chest, but was silenced by a kiss. He returned it, humming softly against Jack’s lips. He let his hands run up the warm, exposed skin of his chest, still in awe of all the sensation in his cybernetic hand. *Work*, Rhys thought scoldingly and pushed off of Jack’s chest. “I’m having lunch with Vaughn and Yvette today, don’t forget.”

“Yeah, whatever. Don’t know why you’d hang out with *those* losers when you’ve got *me*, Handsome frickin’ Jack,” he grumbled, stealing one last kiss while Rhys rolled his eyes.

“I’d make fun of you for being jealous but I’m pretty sure I’m already late. See you tonight!” Rhys hurried out of the bathroom before Jack could stall any longer, not hearing whatever he shouted after him.

—

Rhys’ day had been going surprisingly well. Time was flying by, Vasquez was still at bay, and he didn’t have any projects stacking up to ruin his weekend. Not to mention he actually got to spend some time with his friends at lunch, even though it admittedly felt a little weird not sharing the time with Jack. Were they hanging around each other too much? Oh god, was he being *clingy*? No, surely not, Jack would have said something by now if he was, right?

Actually, come to think of it, *Jack* was the one who seemed kind of clingy. He was always roping Rhys into lunch throughout the week before he even had the chance to make plans with Vaughn and Yvette, and he was always making comments about ‘not needing friends when you’re fucking Handsome Jack.’ He hardly even had the time to see his friends after work anymore, spending most nights at Jack’s penthouse instead of in his own apartment. His friends had said as much at lunch, too. Rhys missed his friends and they missed him, so lunch was a great change of pace. He’d have to talk to Jack about his jealousy or possessiveness or whatever it was, Rhys needed some good friend time.

Just the idea of that conversation seemed terrifying. Jack was a loose cannon, obviously, and Rhys was coming to find his jealousy knew no bounds. Even though the man tried to play it off like he didn’t care, Rhys could tell he was boiling on the inside. It was flattering, Rhys liked that Jack wanted to spend all their time together even if he wouldn’t come out and say it. Rhys felt like he was living in a dream, because even with the ups and downs he was still dating Handsome Jack, who was funny and kind when he wanted to be and, some days, treated Rhys like he was a prince. It was a complete 180 from the beginnings of their relationship, and maybe that proved even Handsome Jack was capable of change.

It was about fifteen minutes before the weekend officially started that Rhys received a text from Jack.

>my office after work

The message felt a little cryptic, Jack didn’t really have Rhys go to his office anymore unless they were having lunch. Every once in a while Jack would call him up so Rhys could get on his knees under Jack’s desk and blow him through particularly boring conference calls but he usually used a lot

more emojis when he texted Rhys for that. Whatever, Rhys wasn't too worried about it, Jack had his reasons. He was probably going to be working a late night or something and wanted to get a quickie in just in case Rhys passed out before Jack even got home. Actually, a quickie sounded great right now.

>>ok, see you there ;)

—

The first thing Jack felt was betrayal. Total, utter betrayal like he'd never felt before, and *that* was saying something. All the times he'd been screwed over, double-crossed, or just straight up lied to, it had never quite felt like this. He felt sick to his stomach, head throbbing in disbelief. After everything he'd been through he thought he was immune to this, almost expected it, but this? He didn't expect this, and that's what hurt the most.

And wasn't that just it? Jack was *hurt*, his chest tight as he watched the feed to his home office over and over again, hoping to see something different, find something that told him this wasn't true. But there was nothing, nothing other than the cold hard truth that he was just a pawn in somebody else's game again. It was foolish of him to think this would be any different, he never should have let himself fall so far. He was *smarter* than that, and yet somehow he fell for it.

Jack wondered just how long this had been going on, if it had been in the works since day one or if a deal had been made somewhere down the line. Maybe it happened sometime when Jack hadn't been paying attention at one of the trade dinners, and wouldn't that just be the icing on the cake. Surely he was partially to blame somehow, he always was, wasn't he?

Anger was starting to take over the sorrow, hands clenched into tight fists as he watched over and over. He never quite pictured it ending like this, always figured he'd be the one to screw things up, but that would have been too easy, wouldn't it? Jack could have at least coped with that, would have *understood* it, but this... He couldn't wrap his head around it, which was so naive of him. Plenty of people tried to extort him for information, he'd faced black mail before, had his fair share of corporate whores thrown at him to distract him. It was pretty common, honestly, he was the richest, most powerful man in the universe, everyone wanted what he had.

The files that got leaked to Maliwan were pretty menial, just some manufacturing locations and the site of one of his Eridium refineries. All the workers there were as good as dead if they weren't already, but Hyperion would hardly take a hit from the stolen info. As far as he could tell this was the first instance, so it was most likely a test to see just what would bleed through the cracks. Thankfully, nothing got past Jack, and even though it took a few days his security measures had caught the breach and alerted him that someone had accessed his files without permission and sent them to the rival company. The worst part was, it had taken so long to catch because Jack had specifically programmed Rhys as a non-threat through all of his systems.

At first, he'd thought it was a mole. Wouldn't be the first time and it certainly wouldn't be the last. He expected to find the son of a bitch, torture information out of them, and then send them on their way out the nearest airlock. But when he saw Rhys strolling into his home office at some strange hour of the night he didn't know what to think. He looked so calm, like he'd been *trained* to do it, using the palm-comp Jack had gotten him to gain access to his computer without a problem.

Jack hated the sinking feeling in his gut every time he saw Rhys' emotionless face as he prodded through his computer like he hadn't just been sleeping next to the CEO he was betraying. He was wearing one of Jack's shirts, too, which had been one of Jack's favorite sights until now. He usually thought Rhys looked so adorable with the baggy material hanging off of his skinny frame, all soft and sweet. But now the sight left a bitter taste in Jack's mouth, everything he thought he trusted or



cared about thrown away. What could Maliwan have possibly given him that Jack couldn't?

Each time Jack watched Rhys finish and walk out of the office he knew where he was going, crawling right back into Jack's bed like nothing had happened. It made his breath catch every time, and he knew that this must have happened the night Rhys had come back to bed with his ECHOeye still glimmering. If he hadn't been so damn tired, so damn *trusting* he might have realized it sooner. Part of him was glad he hadn't, this way he at least got a few more unknowing, blissful days with Rhys.

But that was all over now.

---

The first thing Rhys noticed when he walked into Jack's office was how quiet it was. Jack was usually making *some* kind of noise, whether it be yelling at someone over the phone, yelling at someone in person, yelling at his computer... There was usually a lot of yelling. But right now the room felt eerie, the air stagnant and dead. It gave him goosebumps, the hair on the back of his neck standing on edge. The only time a room felt like this when Jack was around was when someone was about to die.

"Jack?" Rhys called meekly, slowly heading towards the stairs that led up to his desk. The room was darker than usual and Rhys felt like he was under scrutiny as he walked past the giant statues of Jack on either side of him. Jack was shrouded in darkness at his desk, only the light of his holo-screen illuminating him. He was transfixed on whatever was on the screen, not even acknowledging that Rhys was in the room. What the hell was going on? He felt like he was in a horror movie.

"Is everything all right?" His voice felt so small as he started to ascend the steps. Jack finally decided to tear his gaze from whatever he was looking at and Rhys wished he hadn't. He looked furious, eyes dark and brooding, narrowed into tight slits. He'd never felt such fury like this from Jack, like the wrath of god was staring down at him, death's scythe at his throat. Was Jack mad at *him*?

"All right?" Jack finally responded, a sharp edge to his voice. "Why don't you tell me, pumpkin?"

What the hell was that supposed to mean? Rhys stopped in front of Jack's desk, curious but too afraid to look at his screen. "What do you mean? You're really freaking me—" Rhys was cut off when Jack slammed his fist down onto his desk, making the younger man jump in surprise. His heart was pounding in his chest, fear and confusion clouding his mind.

"Why did you do it?" Jack sounded tired and broken in a way Rhys had never heard before. It made his heart clench, hearing him sound so defeated. "Are they paying you? Did they offer you something? I could give you *everything*, Rhys. What do they have that I don't?"

"Jack, I don't know what you're talking about..." This was getting more and more confusing by the second. Was *who* paying him? For what? Jack's eyes were starting to light up like some crazed psycho, that calm before the storm breaking up into clouds of thunder.

"Did they threaten you? Please tell me that's it. That— That would make sense, I'd accept that. Who was it? I'll kill every son of a bitch I have to."

"Who are you—"

"A-tut-tut," Jack scolded, once again interrupting Rhys. He stood from his chair so fast Rhys almost didn't see him move, and then there was a vice grip on his chin, pulling him forward over the desk at a painful angle.

“Ow! Jack, you’re hurting me!” Rhys shouted, hips digging into the edge of the desk as he tried to pull from Jack’s grip. The older man just squeezed harder, making Rhys whimper.

“Stop. Lying. To me,” Jack growled, face mere inches from Rhys’. “I *trusted* you, Rhys. I trusted you, and here you are, lying to my *freakin’* face.”

Rhys’ eyes were starting to well up with tears, from the pain, the fear, the confusion. He grabbed at Jack’s wrist with his flesh hand, stumbling back when Jack pushed his face away and finally let go of his chin.

“Please, Jack, just tell me what’s going on,” Rhys murmured, voice trembling as he fought back tears, “I-I don’t know— I’m so *confused*.”

“Oh, you don’t know? That’s it, huh?” Jack asked, voice sickly-sweet. Rhys felt his gut twist at the way Jack broke out into a maniacal grin. He looked so *unhinged*. “You don’t know that you left *my* bed to sneak into *my* office and steal *my* files? I mean, come on, that’s a load of *shit*, ain’t it? How could you not know when you’re the one who did it!” Jack started laughing, the sound sick and twisted in a way that sent a cold chill down Rhys’ spine.

“*What?*” Rhys was incredulous, completely awestruck. Why would Jack think he would do that? Him, of all people? “I would never do that to you, Jack! What— Why— Why do you think it was me? I swear, it wasn’t—“

Jack slammed his fist down on the desk again, this time making Rhys let out a scared noise. “I said stop lying to me, goddamn it!” Jack shouted, voice booming through the office. Rhys flinched back, vision blurring from the tears.

“I’m not lying!” Rhys sobbed, taking a step back as Jack rounded the desk. He whimpered when Jack grabbed him by the front of his shirt, his own hands reaching out to fist in Jack’s jacket. “I promise! I promise, I don’t know anything! Please, listen to me!”

Jack almost looked remorseful for a moment, his gaze softening as he looked down on Rhys’ face, streaked with tears now. But it was gone in an instant, that deranged rage returning. “You know what you are? You’re nothing more than a pathetic little code monkey trying to cheat his way to the top just like everybody else. Well, guess what, pal, you screwed over the wrong guy. Did you really think I wouldn’t notice? I mean, good job on your part, getting *close* to me, tricking me into thinking you might actually *care*. You know what, Rhys? *I* cared, and look where that got me.”

Rhys tried blinking away his tears but that only made more fall. His hands were trembling where he was holding onto Jack’s jacket, his breaths coming out in quick, erratic little puffs, breaking on strangled sobs. “Jack, *please*,” he whispered, Jack’s face twisting into a threatening snarl, “I— I—“ Rhys took a deep, shuddering breath, mustering up the courage to say what he needed to say, what he hoped would break Jack out of this trance. There was a very real possibility it would backfire, but it was the *truth*, and he hoped Jack could see that.

“I *love* you, Jack,” Rhys said softly, throat tight and aching from crying, “I wouldn’t— I would *never* do anything to hurt you, I *swear*. Please, *please* believe me.” And he did love Jack, he loved him *so much*. How could Jack think he would do something like this to him?

Again, Jack softened, his grip on Rhys’ shirt going lax only for a moment before he tightened it again. Rhys could see the conflict in those heterochromatic eyes, like he was fighting an internal battle with himself. Rhys stayed quiet in the hopes that Jack would figure it out, that he’d realize that what he was saying was insane and that whoever gave him the intel was wrong. So very, very wrong. But then Jack’s face went blank, that same, emotionless look he’d given him when he’d told

Rhys that the woman he'd been fucking was his girlfriend.

"Don't you *dare* say that to me," Jack spat, pulling Rhys around to the other side of the desk. The younger man stumbled behind him, having a hard time finding his footing.

Rhys felt like his whole world was crumbling. He was so *scared*. Not necessarily of Jack, no, he knew Jack wouldn't hurt him. He was scared he was going to *lose* him, that whatever crazy idea had been put into Jack's head would wreck him, wreck what they had. It was like a knife to the heart, telling Jack that he loved him only to be shut down. The worst part of it all was that he didn't know *why*; he didn't know why this was happening, why Jack was so angry. None of this made sense, he *knew* he hadn't done the things Jack was accusing him of, but Jack was so convinced Rhys was beginning to fear there would be no changing his mind.

"If you didn't do it, pumpkin, then who the *fuck* is that?" Jack asked, shoving Rhys towards the holo-screen. Jack had a hand in his hair now, fisting it tight and craning Rhys' neck so he had to look.

What Rhys saw... He saw *himself*, on surveillance footage of Jack's office. Sure enough, he sat down at the desk, activated his palm-comp, and seemingly took some information off of Jack's personal computer. But... How could that be *possible*? He didn't remember doing any of that, he *wouldn't* do any of that. So how was he there, on the screen, proving himself wrong?

"This— This doesn't make sense. Ow!" Jack jerked him back by his hair, making Rhys face him again. "I don't remember doing that! I know it sounds—" Rhys clenched his teeth as Jack's fist tightened in his hair before finally letting go. "I-I know it sounds crazy, but I don't remember!"

Jack moved into his space, looming over him dangerously. "You're right, it *does* sound crazy. And that's coming from me!" Jack let out a sarcastic laugh, and the look on his face made Rhys' heart ache. "The worst part is, I don't even think I could kill ya! Good job, Rhysie, ya got me right where ya want me!"

Rhys placed his flesh hand on Jack's chest gently, his cybernetic one steadying him against the desk. "I-I have no idea *how* that's me in that video, but I swear, I *didn't* do this. I get it, I get that it's hard to believe me right now, *I* wouldn't believe me right now! I mean it, Jack, I love you, please, we can figure this out."

"There's nothing to figure out," Jack said solemnly, placing a kiss to the port on Rhys' temple.

At the same time Rhys' heart dropped at those words his ECHOeye went completely black. He blinked a few times in confusion, trying to get it turn back on. Then his cybernetic arm felt unresponsive, too, falling limp to his side. He looked down at it, trying desperately to move it but to no avail. Did Jack deactivate it remotely somehow? But how? He hadn't even seen Jack move.

Just as Jack turned away from him his cybernetic arm shot out to grab his wrist in a bruising grip. Rhys' eyes widened as he tried to let go of Jack's wrist, only to find he couldn't. He had no control over his arm whatsoever, but then who did? He reached up with his flesh hand to grab the forearm of his robotic one, tugging at it.

"Jack...", he said warily, flinching as Jack grabbed his cybernetic wrist forcefully. "Something's wrong, I-I'm not doing that." Jack yanked at his wrist, fingers digging into the metal and sending sharp bolts of pain through the haptic receptors. "Ow! Ow, Jack, stop!" Jack let out an angry grunt and let go of Rhys' wrist, instead tugging at his own arm to try and break free. Rhys slammed into Jack's chest from the force, causing Jack to lose his footing and fall flat on his back with a grunt. Rhys was right behind him, landing on his chest. He scrabbled to sit up, straddling Jack's waist.

“What the fuck is going on?!” Rhys shouted, his hand still refusing to relinquish its grip. He stopped trying to pull free when Jack hissed beneath him, glancing up to see the pained expression on his face. He couldn’t see it, but the skin beneath his cybernetic fingers must have been rubbed raw at that point.

“Are you gonna let go?!” Jack growled below him.

“I’m trying! I told you, I’m not—“ Rhys was cut short as the hand finally let go of its own volition. Jack’s wrist was red and puffy, the skin torn and bleeding in a few places. Rhys opened his mouth to apologize but instead what came out was a surprised shout as his body lurched forward. This time, his hand was wrapped around Jack’s throat, squeezing hard enough to make the older man cough. Rhys’ eyes went wide, a whole new kind of fear flooding him.

“No! Stop, stop!” Again, his arm wouldn’t budge. His fingers were slowly squeezing tighter and tighter around Jack’s throat, and Jack’s hands came up to grab at his wrist.

“K-Kiddo—,” Jack rasped, gasping for breath, “can’t b-breathe.”

Rhys felt tears building again, panic washing over him and sending chills down his spine. Why was this happening? He didn’t want Jack to die, that was the *last* thing he wanted. But he couldn’t stop it, all he could do was watch as his fist tightened and Jack’s neck grew redder, veins bulging from the pressure.

Handsome Jack was going to die, and Rhys was going to be the one who killed him.

## Chapter 19

### Chapter Notes

Here it is guys!! The beginning of the end. I'll probably sign this story off with one more chapter, but I've got some new stuff in the works! I know I said I was thinking about doing a babysitter AU, but I got to talking with @championofdogs about a college AU that I'm much more interested in. Sorry if any of you were looking forward to the babysitter AU, but we cooked up a lot of awesome ideas that I'm really excited for!!

Rhys looked around the room frantically, trying to find something, *anything* to make this stop. Jack was *dying*, his grip on Rhys' wrist growing weaker and weaker as the air was kept from his lungs. He needed to get his arm off somehow and *fast*. He leaned closer to Jack's desk, struggling against the will of his cybernetic arm. His flesh hand was trembling as he reached for one of the drawers, just barely catching the opening with the tips of his fingers. He grabbed it as hard as he could and yanked, completely pulling the drawer from the desk, its contents scattering across the floor.

When Rhys didn't immediately see anything useful he pulled out another drawer, ignoring the way Jack was starting to convulse under him. He needed to focus, and it would have been easier if he just had his ECHOeye to scan everything and find the best solution but it was still powered down, completely useless. The third drawer he pulled out seemed to be some kind of junk drawer, all kinds of random crap spilling out. That was just the drawer he needed, a screwdriver hitting the floor and rolling over to Rhys until it tapped against his knee like some kind of good omen.

Rhys grabbed the screwdriver with trembling fingers and turned back to Jack. The older man's eyes were rolling into the back of his skull, the hands at his wrist falling limp at his sides. He was running out of time. Rhys steadied his grip on the screwdriver and craned his neck so he could look down at his shoulder. He really hoped this worked.

With a swift stabbing motion Rhys jammed the screwdriver between two of the plates on his shoulder with a scream, pain shooting through him like he'd just been stabbed with a knife to flesh. What vision he did have blurred for a moment before he forced himself to suck it up and keep going. He bent the screwdriver to one side, causing the connectors to groan in protest. His hand hurt from the pressure on the screwdriver and it felt like there was hot fire licking up his cybernetic arm but he didn't stop, not until the panel popped off and scattered across the floor.

"Fuck! *Fuck*, that hurts!" Rhys shouted, looking down at the exposed wires. The opening was too small for him to get his hand into so he stabbed into it with the screwdriver again, crying out as some of the wires broke free. A few of his fingers twitched, loosening their grip on Jack's throat as they spasmed. It was working, and that was all the motivation Rhys needed.

He pried off a few more panels, the ones closest to where metal met flesh at the juncture of his shoulder. Each one hurt like hell and he felt damn near close to throwing up or passing out, or maybe both. The opening was big enough now that he could reach inside and rip at the wires, pulling a good chunk of them free. There was an odd mixture of pain and numbness assaulting his senses as his consciousness started to fade in and out. He couldn't go into shock right now, not when he was so close.

"Why did you have to pick such strong metal?!" Rhys shouted at Jack's unconscious body, tears

streaming down his face and falling onto Jack's mask. He could have had his old arm dismantled in seconds, but this goddamn titanium alloy was a *bitch*. He picked up the screwdriver again and stabbed it between two panels on his forearm, causing something to fizzle and pop with a jolt of electricity before the fingers loosened more.

Rhys jerked forward from the pain, squeezing his eyes shut tightly as he took deep breaths to steady himself. Eighty-seven percent was *not* what he needed right now. With a broken scream, Rhys drove the screwdriver into his arm one last time, the agony he felt nothing compared to the relief as the fingers finally jerked free of their grasp. Jack's neck was a dark red, and Rhys could already see where bruises were forming in the shape of his fingers. It was a terrifying sight, Jack lying so defenseless on the floor, bruised and—

Rhys was ripped from his thoughts when his arm tried twitching back to life again. Each movement sent searing pain up and down his spine, broken connectors popping and sparking. He yanked the screwdriver from his arm and lurched forward as he practically dry-heaved from the twist in his gut. He had to get this goddamn arm *off*. He felt like he needed an exorcism with the way his arm was possessed, even after how badly Rhys had destroyed it.

It took a couple of seconds of blind searching with the tip of the screwdriver before he got it wedged between flesh and metal. He had no idea how the damn thing was still holding up, having expected it to bend a long time ago, but he was glad it hadn't. With a jerk of his wrist Rhys got part of the arm dislodged, and he wasn't even sure if he screamed or not but he wouldn't be surprised if he did. He repeated the action around the edge of the port, prying it further and further from his body until it was only hanging on by what wires were still attached.

On the verge of passing out, Rhys dropped the screwdriver and grabbed the arm, his body arching as he ripped it from his shoulder. He almost fell forward right onto Jack's chest, barely catching himself with the hand that was still attached to his body. He was taking deep, labored breaths, trembling from head to toe. He'd never experienced pain like that before, so deep and intense. It felt like he'd just ripped off actual flesh and bone, but he tried not to think about that. He looked to where the arm had been, only a few stray wires and the hole where the socket connected left. He wasn't sure if it was blood or oil dripping down his side and soaking into his shirt, but if he had to guess it was probably both.

It took immense effort but Rhys pushed himself back up onto his knees, still straddling Jack's... *Lifeless* body. At least, it felt lifeless underneath him, stiff and unmoving. Any lingering thoughts about himself dissipated, his mind going completely numb to the pain as dread set in. Jack couldn't be dead, he just fucking *couldn't*. Rhys felt trepidation crawling up the back of his skull again, constricting his lungs until he felt like he was suffocating.

"Jack...?" He whispered softly, tears welling up in his eyes before he could even form any rational thought. He should check his pulse or see if he was breathing, but he couldn't think that far. Right now, Jack looked *dead*, and he couldn't cope with that.

"I'm so sorry," Rhys croaked, curling forward to bury his face in Jack's chest. He couldn't control himself as his shoulders quaked with sobs, the fingers of his flesh hand curling into Jack's side, gripping at the fabric of his sweater. He wasn't sure how long he cried for, repeating apology after apology into the tear-damp fabric of Jack's clothes.

Why hadn't Jack done anything to stop him? Rhys knew he always had a pistol on him, why hadn't he shot him? At the very least he could have pistol whipped him, knocked him unconscious so he didn't have to fucking *die*. Jack was at least twice as strong as him, but he hadn't so much as flinched as Rhys strangled the life out of him. It made Rhys angry, which seemed awful and misdirected but

he couldn't help it. If Jack had done something, *anything*, he could have been alive right now, and Rhys wouldn't feel like he was falling through the floor into the deep, never-ending pit of space.

A sharp intake of breath above him had Rhys sitting up ramrod straight, Jack's wide, bewildered eyes staring up at him. He started coughing, choking on the air that was finally allowed back into his lungs. Rhys couldn't believe what he was seeing, staring back silently as Jack tried to catch his breath. Was he hallucinating? Had the shock really fucked with his brain enough that he was seeing things? Hesitantly, Rhys reached forward, brushing his fingertips over Jack's cheek. He *felt* real, warm with life beneath his touch. Jack's coughing fit finally calmed down to deep lungfuls of air, each breath trembling past his lips. Blue and green eyes blinked rapidly as tears hit his cheeks, nose wrinkling in agitation.

"What are you crying about?" Jack's voice was hoarse from, y'know, the whole strangling thing. It sounded like he needed a huge glass of water and some lozenges. "Where the hell's your arm?" Jack looked at the spot where his arm had been, eyebrow arched in confusion.

"Shut up," Rhys said with the happiest grin, leaning down so fast to hug Jack he nearly smacked his forehead onto the floor. He wrapped the one arm he had left around Jack's shoulders, squeezing him as tight as he could. Jack's hands at his back was soothing, big and warm, a firm reminder that Jack was *alive*. His breaths were still labored against Rhys' skin, prickling goosebumps all along his neck.

"I thought you were *dead*, Jack," Rhys murmured, the words alone making his chest tighten and his gut clench. He squeezed his eyes shut tight as Jack pulled him closer, fully wrapping his arms around Rhys' thin frame. He felt so safe in Jack's arms, like everything hadn't just gone to hell. It was a nice change of pace after having so much adrenaline pumping through his system.

"You thought your skinny ass could kill *me*? Fat chance, princess." Rhys could hear the grin on Jack's lips, and normally a comment like that would piss him off to no end but the sheer *normalcy* of it was enough to have Rhys smiling, too. He let out a little puff of laughter that worked itself into a sob, this time shedding tears of relief. He was surprised he had any tears left to cry today.

Jack stroked his back as he cried and cried and *cried*, pressing soft kisses against his temple and along his neck. It always amazed him, how almost sweet Jack could be when he tried. The fearless, ruthless CEO of Hyperion, capable of compassion, who would have thought? Eventually Rhys got himself calmed down enough to stop crying, messily rubbing at his tears without letting go of Jack. When he finally pushed himself up so he could look down at Jack he realized just how tired he was, every muscle in his body aching, eyes throbbing and heavy.

"I think we should go to the medical bay...", Rhys mumbled absently as he gently touched at the bruises on Jack's neck, flinching away when Jack hissed at the touch. "Sorry! Sorry, I didn't meant to hurt you." Rhys felt a hand at the back of his head suddenly, fingers combing through his hair as he was pulled down into a tender kiss. It was simple, just a firm pressure, but Rhys swore he'd never shared such an amazing kiss with someone in his life. It was probably due to the overflow of endorphins in his system, his body hyper-responsive between the leftover shocks of adrenaline and the joy that Jack was still alive.

"I know, pumpkin," Jack murmured against his lips, voice starting to crack from overuse, "trust me, I know."

—

Rhys flinched as Jack plugged the 'executive override' (as Jack had called it) into his neural port. He never got used to having something directly connected to his consciousness, it always felt like something was invading, prodding somewhere it didn't belong. The raw connection was jarring,

sending a shock through his body that had him jumping in Jack's gaudy yellow chair. He was soothed, however, by the warm hand that cupped his face, turning his gaze up to the CEO standing before him.

"Relax, kiddo. Just gotta make sure those Maliwan bastards aren't still camping around in your brain." Jack was right, it was better to be safe than sorry, and it wasn't like Rhys didn't trust him, he'd just had enough of things in his brain that weren't him. Not that he'd even noticed that Maliwan had taken up shop in his cybernetics, but still, the idea of it made his skin crawl.

It hadn't taken Jack long to figure out who the Maliwan mole was in the robotics team, and after he'd tortured the truth out of him Jack threw him out of an airlock or... Something. Rhys didn't want the details of just how Jack had killed the man, but he assumed it was something gruesome. Jack had been *furious* when he found out a mole had gotten in, and Rhys honestly felt kind of flattered that most of Jack's anger stemmed from something happening to him. Really, in the long run, Jack was the one who'd gotten the worst of it, but the CEO didn't take too kindly to Maliwan scum taking advantage of his boyfriend (yes, Jack had *actually* used the word boyfriend, even if he had quickly recanted it when Rhys started teasing him).

What was supposed to be a very thoughtful gift ended up being the means of trying to bring Hyperion and its CEO down. Apparently, the mole from Maliwan had been drifting around Helios for a while, and when he'd caught wind of Jack's special project for Rhys he'd relayed the information back to the rival company. He was sent an encrypted flash drive that contained the malware that had corrupted Rhys' cybernetics and was instructed to install it into the new arm. Once Jack had attached the arm, the program downloaded in the background where Rhys couldn't see it until it activated while he was sleeping that night he stole information from Jack's computer. All in all, pretty scary shit and Rhys didn't want to think about having a program in his brain that he didn't know about.

"Hopefully we can get this bad boy working again, too," Jack added, tapping at Rhys' brow above his ECHOeye. Rhys had regained his sight after the (new) robotics team fixed the connectors for his arm and re-installed his old one, but they hadn't been able to get its ECHO capabilities back online. Honestly, he was just glad he could see with both eyes again.

"I'm still creeped out by—" Rhys was cut off as Jack activated the program, letting out an undignified noise as electricity jolted through him. "You could have warned me, asshole!" Rhys shouted, glaring over at Jack's snickering face.

"Yeah, but I wanted to see you squirm." Jack winked and leaned back against his desk, arms crossed over his chest.

Rhys couldn't see anything, per se, but he could *feel* the program moving around, checking over his diagnostics and all the deep crevices of his mind he couldn't even consciously access. It felt like someone was flipping through files in a filing cabinet, flicking past one after the other, too fast to read but he could still tell they were there. He clenched his fists around the armrests, fidgeting uncomfortably at the sensation. Suddenly, his ECHOeye flickered on, everything in the room taking on a blue hue as a loading bar hovered across his vision.

"Jack, my eye! It's back on!" Rhys exclaimed, blinking a few times to make sure he was seeing it right. The progress bar didn't say what it was far, just slowly filled up in front of him. It made him nervous, but also a little excited.

"I see that, pumpkin," Jack said condescendingly, leaning forward so he could grab Rhys' face with both hands and pull his eyelids apart. Rhys tried to pry himself away from Jack's intrusive hands but Jack had no trouble holding him still.



“Ugh, stop, that feels weird!” Rhys squirmed, only to have Jack press his head back into the chair to help keep him in place.

“Stop squirming, ya brat. I’m just making sure everything’s normal.” Jack continued prodding at his eye, mushing his eyelids around and poking at the moist outer membrane that allowed the artificial eye to move around without hurting him. Jack quirked an eyebrow just as the progress bar completed and blinked out of existence.

“Well, is it working?” Jack asked, finally letting go of Rhys’ face so he could blink freely, which he did so multiple times.

“Uhh, I dunno, let me check.” Rhys activated his ECHOeye and looked at Jack, choosing to analyze the CEO for his test run. His eye informed him it was scanning before the ECHOeye 2.1 program popped open, words scrawling across his vision rapidly.

#### ANALYSIS COMPLETE

Handsome Jack

Age: [redacted]

Hometown: [redacted]

Occupation: CEO of Hyperion

Current Status: Totally frickin’ hot

*As the CEO of Hyperion, Handsome Jack is the most notorious man in the universe. What is he known for? Being totally freakin’ awesome. And hot. (Also, he’s super rich.)*

Rhys made a face at the description he was given. Any information he received through his ECHOeye was fed from the Hyperion database, so he didn’t doubt that Jack had but that horrendously egotistical blurb in himself.

“Yup, definitely working,” Rhys muttered as he rolled his eyes, deactivating the analysis. Just then the computer beeped behind Jack to signify it was done with its scans, making the older man turn around.

“Looks like you’re all good, pumpkin. You ready to unplug?”

Rhys nodded but still couldn’t stop himself from flinching when Jack pulled the plug free. His neural port snapped shut and his mind felt a little fuzzy for a few seconds but after that, he finally felt normal again. He reached up to rub at the port but Jack beat him to it, gently swiping his thumb over the spot before he started kneading circles into it. The sensation had Rhys scooting to the edge of his seat, shuddering bodily at the touch. He leaned forward to bury his face in Jack’s abdomen, letting out soft, muffled little whimpers into his clothes. Normally, he hated how much Jack loved toying with him there, but right now, after all the hook-ups he’d suffered through over the past few days to make sure everything was cleared out, it felt *amazing*.

Rhys let out a heavy sigh when Jack finally stopped to instead pet at his hair. Rhys glanced up at him from under his lashes, warming at the soft smile on Jack’s lips. He was so glad that nightmare was over, glad to see that the bruises on Jack’s neck were mostly healed, the last traces of the event fading with them. Rhys’ eyes fluttered shut again when Jack placed a hand on the back of his neck, firm and steady.

—

Rhys arched off the bed with a desperate moan as he dug his heels into the back of Jack’s thighs harder. As soon as they’d gotten back to Jack’s penthouse the older man had practically chased Rhys

into the bedroom and pushed him down into the mattress. It had been a few days since they'd had sex, both men too out of commission from everything to do much more than make out under the sheets before one of them fell asleep. But everything was in the clear now, and Jack's libido had skyrocketed right back to where it'd always been, needy hands and a hungry tongue ravishing at Rhys' body.

Jack was pounding into him with all the ferocity of a wild animal, and he was grunting and groaning like one, too. All Rhys could do was fall mercy to it, clinging to Jack's shoulders for dear life as he was fucked into next week, and *damn* if he didn't love it. He was moaning and gasping on every thrust, toes curling from the pleasure. They'd only been going at it for maybe fifteen minutes, but Rhys already felt like he was close.

Rhys tilted his head to the side as he felt Jack kissing and biting at his neck, working his way up. They were sloppy, wet kisses that sent chills up his spine and made his cock twitch between them. Jack shifted his hips mid-thrust and caught the head of his cock right against Rhys' prostate. He threw his head back into the pillows with a shout, each thrust after that driving into him just right.

"Oh my god, *Jack*. Jack, Jack, J—*ahh!*—ck!" Rhys cried his name over and over, fingers scrabbling for purchase in Jack's hair. He tugged at the locks, trying to hold back his orgasm as long as he could.

Jack had brought his kisses up to Rhys' ear, giving the lobe a sharp bite that made Rhys whimper before he licked along the shell. One hand squeezed Rhys' thigh affectionately, fingers caressing the smooth skin while also holding Rhys in place as he fucked into him. His other arm was braced against the bed, holding himself up so he didn't crush the lanky little thing beneath him.

"*Rhysie*," Jack purred in his ear, voice breathy and gruff. He placed a kiss to the shell of Rhys' ear and nipped at the soft skin on his cheekbone, hot puffs of breath tickling Rhys' eyelashes. Rhys tried to dignify him with an answer but Jack's hips were just moving *too fast*, pathetic moans and whines the only thing he could manage every time he parted his lips. If Jack so much as *breathed* on his cock right now he was pretty sure he'd come.

"You listenin', buttercup?" Jack cooed, his hips slowing enough to clear Rhys' mind a little but also causing him complain in the form of a very long, drawn out whine. Jack chuckled and gave Rhys a rough snap of his hips that had the younger man arching off the bed for more. Rhys felt like he was going to *die* if Jack didn't fuck him faster or harder or *something*, just not the slow, even pace he'd suddenly taken on. There was a time and place for passionate, sensual love making, but this was *not* the time.

"Jack, *please*, I need it, need it so bad—," Rhys moaned as Jack gave another snap of his hips and a threatening bite to his tattoo. God, Rhys didn't have the damn time to listen to Jack ramble on about something right now. Normally Rhys loved the sound of Jack's voice, could probably even get off to it, but again, *not the time*.

"Hey now, daddy's trying to talk." How the *fuck* was he so calm like that, buried balls-deep in the best piece of ass he'd ever had?! (Not confirmed, but Rhys liked to think so.) Rhys whined, *again*, high-pitched and distraught at this point. Another snap of hips, another strangled cry. He really didn't deserve this, did he?

"*I love you, Rhysie*," came Jack's whisper, soft and tantalizing. Had he even heard that right? Surely he hadn't, but it still settled inside him happily, his body tingling from the inside out, buzzing all the way out to his fingertips and his toes. Rhys stared up at the ceiling dazedly as he processed the words, but he was only given a moment of conscious thought before Jack was pounding into him again, their skin slapping together as Rhys arched his back high, mouth hung open on the cry of

pleasure that was stuck in his throat.

“I fuckin’ *love you*, ya hear me?” Jack growled, fingernails digging into Rhys’ thigh, presumably to get his attention. Rhys let out a broken sob, trying to think through the pleasure. He could tell by Jack’s tone that he wanted a response, *expected* one, Rhys had picked up on these things after bedding the man as often as he did. It was just so hard trying to think straight when you’re on the verge of orgasm.

“Y-Yes, yes, I hear you!” Rhys managed to rasp out, and somehow Jack went harder, absolutely fucking him *raw*. Rhys hadn’t even realized his eyes had closed until they were snapping open as Jack fisted a hand in his hair and pulled at it tightly. *Yes*, this was the rough, dominating Jack that he needed right now. He stared up into those heterochromatic eyes, neck craning from the pressure of Jack pulling his hair.

“That’s it? That’s all you’ve got?” Jack’s face was twisted in anger, but Rhys could tell by the look in his eyes that it was all an act. Jack was playing into what Rhys wanted, and that realization had Rhys’ cock twitching painfully.

“I love you, too,” Rhys whimpered, thighs trembling where they were clenched tight around Jack’s hips. Tears prickled at the corners of his eyes, threatening to spill over. “I love you, Jack, please!”

Jack kissed him so hard Rhys thought he was going to get a fat lip, teeth and tongues fighting between them. When the kiss broke Jack let his weight fall onto Rhys, using the hand that had been supporting him to wrap around Rhys’ weeping cock. It barely took one full stroke before Rhys was coming, crying out Jack’s name as he shook with his orgasm. Jack fucked him, *thoroughly*, through it, to the point where Rhys was sobbing beneath him, quivering from the overstimulation as his hands grasped at Jack’s body sporadically for purchase.

Jack came inside Rhys with a tapered off groan, pressing their hips flush together. They held each other for a while, panting against each other’s skin as they tried to calm their racing hearts. Rhys blinked away the last of his lingering tears as he traced patterns into Jack’s back and across his ribs with his fingertips. Everything felt so perfect, even if Rhys’ hips were sore and they were both way too sweaty.

“I mean it, pumpkin,” Jack mumbled against his neck, lifting his head so he could place a tender kiss to Rhys’ lips. When they parted, Rhys stared into Jack’s eyes expectantly, hoping he’d say it without the passion of sex garnering his emotions.

“I love you.”

Rhys smiled and smiled, smiled until he started giggling, giddy from all the emotion. Jack, for once, didn’t look offended or make some kind of snarky comment. Instead, he just kissed Rhys’ cheek and let his lips linger there until the younger man finally calmed down.

“I love you too, Jack.”

## Chapter 20

### Chapter Summary

Rhys is in for a surprise...

### Chapter Notes

Wow, this is finally it!! I had a great time writing this story and I'm so glad so many people have enjoyed it! Thank you to everyone for supporting me with all of your wonderful comments and kudos! I appreciate every single one of you and I hope I can continue to bring you guys content that you enjoy!

This final chapter is more like a little send-off so it's kinda short, but it's sweet and I love it so I hope you love it too!!

The first time Rhys had seen him without his mask it had been an accident. Jack wasn't sure he ever wanted Rhys to face what lie beneath the artificial skin, it was a debate he'd gone over in his head more than a few times. The gesture seemed so intimate, far too intimate for him to be comfortable with, no matter how close he'd gotten with Rhys over the past year. Something was always holding him back, whether it be his own insecurities or the crippling anxiety that filled him every time Rhys let his fingers dance across the edges of it curiously. He knew Rhys wanted to see, it was plain as day on his face any time they were close. Those effervescent brown and blue eyes seemed to peer at him so deeply in those moments, almost as if Rhys thought that if he looked hard enough, he'd be able to see right through the facade Jack wore every day.

Jack had been in the shower, for the record. It was the only time he ever let his true face breathe, and even then he'd avoid looking at himself in the mirror, couldn't even face the faint reflection he cast against the glass walls of the shower. The sensitive edges of the scar burned beneath the hot spray of water, like the tip of a searing knife was carving the mark into his skin over and over again. There were days where it was numb, lying to him as if it weren't there. Those days he'd stand beneath the shower head with his face beneath the spray, slowly edging the water hotter and hotter until he could feel it so intensely he'd have to step away with a gasp.

Jack would scrub at the scar, sometimes even dig his fingernails into the skin as if he could pick away at it like a scab. That burned more than anything, the various cleansers and exfoliants he'd tried, the experimental R&D ointments he'd used all in failed attempts to rid himself of the horrendous brand on his face. He'd scrub until tears prickled at the corners of his eyes, until it felt like the skin was rubbed so raw that it felt puffy and tingled from even the slightest touch. He knew it wasn't going anywhere, that he was stuck with the ugly reminder of his mistakes, but he couldn't stop. It as a compulsion, itching at his hind brain like a mosquito bite.

Jack had been working a late night while Rhys slept in his bed, curled up in the blankets where Jack had left him. He'd been working from his home office, eyes bleary and tired, burning from the light of his computer screen and the various ECHO devices he'd been glancing at that were now scattered

about his desk. It wasn't until he'd read over the same few lines of text and still didn't understand what he was looking at that he'd realized it was time to call it quits. He shut off all the screens, tried to make some sense of the mess on his desk, and then headed for the bathroom. A quick shower before bed always helped wind him down, helped clear his head of any work-related matters so he had the head space to focus on sleep and the feeling of Rhys beside him.

His fingers were already flicking at the clasps with experienced ease on his way to the bathroom, the clicking of the metal so loud in his ears with the stillness of night around him. He tossed it carelessly onto the countertop beside the sink and stripped himself of his clothes, not bothering to close the door behind him. Rhys usually didn't wake up in the middle of the night and he didn't plan on taking more than ten minutes anyway. If he was being honest, he was too tired to think that Rhys might see him like this, ugly and exposed. He just went about his routines mindlessly, working as quick as he could in his tired state.

It wasn't until Jack lowered the towel from where he'd been drying his hair and face that he noticed Rhys standing in the doorway. His hair was messy and soft, eyes heavy with sleep as he rubbed at the blue one tiredly; Jack knew his ECHOeye sometimes got dry when he first woke up. He looked so cute standing there, wearing a tiny little pair of shorts and one of Jack's old shirts that didn't fit him anymore. The fact that he wasn't wearing his mask was completely escaping his mind at that moment, the sight of his lover distracting him enough to make him forget. Rhys didn't seem to notice at first either, smiling softly at Jack until he lowered his hand from his face and took a step closer to the older man before he paused.

Suddenly, Rhys' eyes didn't look so tired anymore, slowly opening wider and wider in shock. At least, Jack assumed it was shock, maybe disgust once he realized what Rhys was looking at. Jack's stomach sank as dread set in, skin prickling with uneasy goosebumps like a wary animal ready to bolt. A few moments stretched between them, Rhys gawking at him open-mouthed and speechless. Once Jack snapped out of his existential dread he made a move towards the counter in an attempt to grab his mask. There wasn't much he could hide now, Rhys had already seen him, but at least he wouldn't feel so torn open for the world to see with it on.

Somehow Rhys was faster, those long legs gliding him across the bathroom in a swift blur of movement so he stood between Jack and the mask, his lower back pressed against the countertop. Jack froze, arm outstretched awkwardly between them. He started to pull back, to retreat, but Rhys reached out for him, taking hold of his wrist softly with his left hand. He tugged Jack closer without any real force, just a gesture of *'come here'* that had Jack obliging to silently.

Jack kept his gaze anywhere but Rhys, casting down to the floor, off into the distance beyond the open bathroom door. He could feel Rhys looking at him, those mismatched eyes boring into him almost hotter than the edges of the scar itself. A cybernetic hand lay gently on his chest as Rhys crowded closer to him, close enough that Jack could faintly smell the toothpaste on his breath from when he must have brushed his teeth before bed. The closeness in Jack's fragile state was almost enough to make him tremble. He started to take deep breaths through his nose, nostrils flaring with the effort to keep himself calm.

When Rhys reached up with his left hand Jack visibly flinched back a few inches, finally meeting Rhys' gaze with a look of caution. His brow was starting to furrow with anger and chest tightening anxiously. The silence was tormenting him, Rhys' lack of words making his skin crawl; he needed something, anything from the younger man, but all he was getting was static. Jack swallowed a lump in his throat when Rhys' expression softened, exhibiting patience as if he were introducing himself to a skittish animal.

Once Rhys was sure Jack wasn't going to dodge him again he continued to reach forward until his

fingertips brushed the unscarred skin of Jack's cheek. It took every ounce of what little control Jack had to not grab Rhys' wrist and yank it away with enough force to dislocate his shoulder. He had to close his eyes when Rhys's fingers started to move, heart pounding in his chest so erratically he was afraid he might have a heart attack.

The first contact Rhys made with the scar was at one end, down by his jawline where it started. It stung, making him hiss softly as his lips curled back into a pained snarl. Rhys jumped, fingers lifting off of his skin a moment before he hesitantly brought them back. The stinging sensation slowly subsided as Rhys started to gradually trace over the arc, his fingers almost cool against the constant burn of the Vault emblem.

Rhys' fingers stopped when he reached the part of the scar that cut across his left eye. His fingertips ghosted over his closed eyelid, tickling his eyelashes in their wake. Jack opened his eyes then, his normally vibrantly green iris more dull than Rhys had ever seen. Jack could only see him through his blue eye now, the ocular implant of his mask not there to aid his sight.

"Can you see out of it?" Rhys finally spoke quietly, voice cracking slightly from the remnants of sleep. He cleared his throat and brushed his thumb just under the dead eye.

"With the mask," Jack answered simply, turning his head just slightly so his lips brushed against the inside of Rhys' wrist. He leaned forward just enough so he could brace his hands on the counter on either side of Rhys, towel still clutched tightly in one hand. "Workin' on a solid zero for depth perception right now." Rhys smiled softly at that.

Jack wasn't *completely* blind in his left eye, though it was damn near close. Legally speaking, definitely blind, but he could make out some fuzzy shapes, sometimes he could distinguish colors. He really had to focus to really see any of that, though. His brain pretty much blocked out that that eye existed when he didn't have the mask on, rendering it useless; or at least more useless than it already was.

The feeling of Rhys' lips just below his eye was foreign. He'd never felt a sensation like that before, the soft skin of his lips making the scar single in a new way. He was left kind of dumbfounded, mouth agape as he tried to process whether it was a good sensation or a bad one. He'd never let anyone else this close to his scar, hell, he'd never even let anyone else see it, not even Nisha. The only other people who had ever laid eyes on it besides himself were Athena (that bitch) and Lillith (that *bitch*), and that was merely upon circumstance.

"How come you never let me see it?" Rhys murmured against the skin, sending soft little vibrations and puffs of breath across it. It was a good sensation, Jack decided.

"What do you mean 'how come I never let you see it'? It's frickin' ugly, that's '*how come*'," Jack pursed his lips tight when Rhys opened his eyes to glare at him, pulling back from where his lips had been caressing his skin. Jack wanted that back.

"I don't think it's ugly," Rhys said innocently, and Jack's face instantly deadpanned like he'd just been told the worst lie he'd ever heard, "I don't! Don't look at me like that. It's... It's you, and I love you. I don't think any part of you is ugly, except maybe the part of you that eats all of my favorite snacks before I can even have *one*."

Jack snorted and jabbed a thumb into Rhys' side, making the younger man grunt and try to wiggle away. "Y'know, I'd rather you just say, 'hey, ya got an ugly mug but I can deal with that!' I don't need this patronizing shit."

Rhys' face hardened into an angry glare, the hand at Jack's chest poking a finger square in the

middle. “Patronizing? You think I’m *patronizing* you?”

“No, no, sweetheart, I *know* you’re patronizing me,” Jack seethed, getting closer to Rhys’ face. He tried not to flinch when Rhys dug the hard metal of his finger harder into his chest.

“You don’t wanna trust me? *Fine*, don’t, not my problem.” Ain’t that the truth. Trust was Jack’s problem, a big problem at that. If there was one thing Jack could chalk all of his issues up to, it was trust. He trusted Rhys more than he’d trusted anyone in his entire life, which was somehow saying a lot but also not much at the same time.

Jack let go of the counter with one hand to instead reach up to grab onto Rhys’ chin, holding him steady. “You think it’s so damn pretty? Then take a *good* look, pumpkin. This is the rest of your life right here.”

That statement had the malice and boiling anger in the room fizzling out like the carbonation in a can of soda. Both of their faces fell into something more confused, the weight of what Jack had said coming down on them. The pressure of Rhys’ finger at Jack’s chest slowly started to let up before it fell away completely.

It was Rhys who reached forward to cup Jack’s face with both hands as he pulled him into a hard kiss, and even though Jack’s lips like *this* felt identical to the lips Rhys had been kissing for so long now, it still somehow felt *better*. Jack let go of Rhys’ chin and pressed bodily against him, pinning the younger man between himself and the counter. As Jack’s arms wrapped around Rhys’ waist Rhys wrapped his arms around Jack’s neck, flesh hand curling into his hair to pull him somehow harder into the kiss.

It wasn’t sloppy like their hungry, eager kisses they shared late at night, but it also wasn’t anything like the soft, tender ones that came along with the artificial sunlight that danced across Jack’s room early in the morning. This was something different, something needy and craving that left them both out of breath and flushed in the face and *wow*, Jack was *blushing*.

“The rest of my life, huh?” Rhys murmured between them, a big, stupid smile on his lips that made Jack warm all over.

“Shut up,” Jack grunted, biting at Rhys’ bottom lip threateningly. It only made the younger man giggle and give a bite back of his own. Jack appreciated the way Rhys shuddered in his arms when he pressed him hard against the counter in retaliation.

“I think I can live with that.” Rhys kissed him again, softer this time, giving himself enough room to whisper a soft, “I love you,” against Jack’s lips.

“I love you, too, baby,” Jack whispered back, leaving his mask on the counter when they made their way to the bed.

Jack fell asleep to Rhys tracing his fingers over his scar rhythmically that night, and most nights after that.

## End Notes

@championofdogs did an awesome fan art for chapter 3!! Find it here:

<https://twitter.com/championofsin/status/1165711563224965121?s=21>

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